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Gandhi Centenary Papers

VOLUME : 4

SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY
OF GANDHI

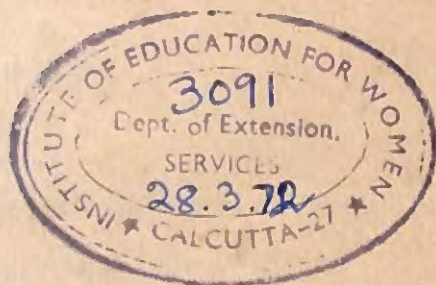
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GANDHI CENTENARY PAPERS

Edited by
Dr. K. S. Saxena
Director
Council of Oriental Research



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These essays were conceived as a series of explorations of various aspects of Gandhiji's life and thought, several of which had not been treated to any large extent in the voluminous literature about the leader.

The chief aim of the book is to present a compact and reasonably comprehensive picture of Gandhiji's achievement and some of the means for an evaluation of that achievement. To this end the aspects concerning Gandhiji as man and his thought have been examined. The book containing also a succinct analysis of the relevance of the Gandhian thought in the present times opens up the whole of the Gandhiana for study and exploration.

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GANDHI CENTENARY PAPERS



Volume 4 : Social and Educational Philosophy of Gandhiji.

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P R E F A C E

These essays were conceived as a series of explorations of various aspects of Gandhiji's life and thought, several of which I felt, had not been treated to any large extent in the voluminous literature about the leader and I sought friendly co-operation of the various scholars whose contributions make up the text of this book. In making the selection of topics and assembling them into a pattern, I have been governed by several considerations. I determined to include only those essays which could be fitted in sections already decided. The general layout of this set of four books is as follows :

Volume 1 : Gandhi : the Man

- (a) Introduction.
- (b) Facets of Gandhiji's personality.

Volume 2 : Economic Philosophy of Gandhi

- (a) Introductory.
- (b) View of the State.
- (c) Major topics.
- (d) Reassessment.
- (e) Relevance of Gandhian Economic thought to day.

Volume 3 : Political Philosophy of Gandhi

- (a) Introductory.
- (b) View of the State.
- (c) Major topics.
- (d) Reassessment.
- (e) Relevance of Gandhian Political thought today.

Volume 4 : Social and Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi

- (a) Introductory.
- (b) View of the State.
- (c) Approach to society.
- (d) Major topics.
- (e) Reassessment of Gandhi's Social thought.
- (f) Relevance of Gandhian Social thought today.
- (g) Gandhi's message to the student's community.
- (h) Reassessment of Gandhi's Educational thought
- (i) Relevance of Gandhian Educational thought.

I decided that the essays, in most cases could usefully explore material that has been ignored, or regarded as unimportant by previous writers, even though by so doing I might be obliged to omit restatements of the obvious comments upon his thought long realized to be of central significance.

Limitations of space have prevented my making full use of all the help I have been given, or commenting upon more than a small number of those aspects of Gandhi's life and thought which still demanded further attention if a complete perspective upon his life-work is to be gained. Several of these essays are more in the nature of prolegomena than complete studies but I hope that they may lead to further explanations and discoveries. The essays it contains, taking in the personalia and thought of Gandhiji were each editorially invited from educationists who share, perhaps, nothing more than the willingness to respond afresh and directly to the challenge of Gandhiji's thought. The editor assumes responsibility for the structure of the book and for the map of Gandhiji's enduring thought, which it implies, but the individual areas, assigned, were entrusted to good offices of their tenants.

The volume of literature about Gandhiji has reached mountainous proportions. This set of four books adds little to the size of the mountain and does not greatly alter its shape. As said earlier, the chief aim of this set is to present a compact and reasonably comprehensive picture of Gandhiji's achievement. To this end, the aspects concerning Gandhiji as man and his thought have been examined.

The creation of this set of four books has meant a great deal of work for a large number of people. I would like to express my gratitude to all those who helped me.

Finally, I would like to dedicate my part in this work to my son Shri Durga Shanker Saxena, who is lost to the world, but whose quest to borrow more and more from the universe of knowledge and now his ever-haunting memory always keeps me active and creating.

—Dr. K. S. SAXENA.

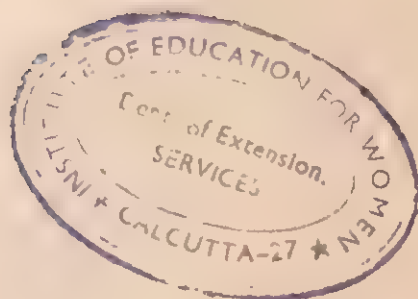


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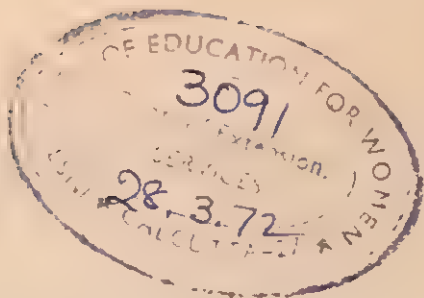
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1 Basic Thoughts of Gandhi's Social Philosophy

R. N. Vyas







1 Basic Thoughts of Gandhi's Social Philosophy

R. N. Vyas

Gandhi was a great social thinker. He had a rare potentiality of thinking on unbeaten lines and a capacity of putting a constructive social philosophy before the world. The modern world which is shaking under the assaults of cold and hot wars and is threatened with utter destruction due to the invention of powerful atomic weapons must try to understand Gandhi's social philosophy. Its study can bring sanity to the minds of the people and a new hope to the sinking world,

For understanding the basic social philosophy of Gandhi, we should try to understand some basic thoughts around which his entire social philosophy whirls. If we can intelligently grasp the import of these thoughts, we shall be able to have a right perspective of Gandhian Social Philosophy. It will not be my endeavour to deal with these ideas here in the present article in detail because that would mean making the letter voluminous. My purpose shall be served if I am able to draw the pointed attention of my thoughtful readers towards them. I am sure if they give their attention to these thoughts and ponder over them, their entire approach towards the solution of various social problems may be reoriented.

Love for Truth :

The very first thing that deserves our notice is Gandhi's passionate Love for Truth. "The world" wrote Gandhi, "rests upon

the bed-rock of **satya** or truth. **Asatya**, meaning untruth, also means non-existent, and **satya** or truth also means that which is. If untruth does not so much as exist its victory is out of question, And Truth being that which is, can never be destroyed". Gandhi loved Truth so steadfastly that he preferred to describe Truth as God. One can afford to deny God, but one cannot afford to deny Truth. It cannot be denied that many of our troubles are because of the fact that we are not truth-ful. Our teacher, our preacher, our leader-every one tries to deny truth through his conduct. Our words act merely as the cloak to hide our real being. But Gandhi's first principle was to be truthful. We who have glorified untruthfulness in the form of diplomacy or tactfulness or practical attitude must follow Gandhi in worshipping Truth through our conduct. If we can do so we can make our society and government free from the virus of corruption. Gandhi was so truthful that whenever he happened to detect his mistake, he would not lose time in accepting it. In fact he wrote : "It is part of my nature that once I see my error I cannot conceal it. Other people believe in consistency, I have no regard for consistency as such. My only concern is with truth as I see it from moment to moment". Gandhi was able to develop a very tolerant view in life due to his love for truth.

Love of God :

The second important trait of Gandhi's personality was his love for God. For him there was no difference between Truth and God. But God was a living, throbbing reality for him. His God was by no means a sectarian God. For him God was One. In the year 1934 while addressing a meeting of Harijans who did not believe in God he stated that his faith in the existence of God was more deep-rooted and sound than the fact that he spoke before them. But Gandhi always believed that God is the creator and sustainer of all beings and an embodiment of moral virtues and kindness. He wrote in the **Young India** dated 12-3-1925 : "To me God is truth and love, God is ethics and morality ; God is fearlessness, God is the source of light and life, and He is above and beyond all these. God is

conscience. He is the personal God to those who need His personal presence. He is embodied to those who need His touch. He is the purest essence. He simply is to those who have faith. He is all things to all men. He is in us and yet above and beyond us". He stated once that because of his faith in God he loved all the beings and did not develop any hatred for any person. He also believed that to serve humanity, to serve the poor and down-trodden people meant merely to serve God. To serve humanity was a pious work, a sacred thing, the very God's worship for Gandhiji.

At present we have learnt to question the existence of God. And logically speaking one may not be able to find out any proof of God's existence; but one has not been able to realize that in the words of Voltair if there is no God we shall be required to invent one. Faith in God has been responsible for the sincerity and truthfulness of many people in the past. The business man who believed that God exists hesitated in cheating customers, the man in authority dreaded the anger of God. Therefore most of the people did their jobs quite sincerely as a result of which the human society was not thrown in jitters. But now the modern man has dismissed God as a useless fiction of mind. The result is that corruption is eating away the life of society from every side.

Because of his faith in God, Gandhi believed in the universal brotherhood of Mankind. Let me quote the very words of Gandhi : " I believe in the absolute oneness of God, and therefore also of humanity. What though we have different bodies ? We have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source. I cannot, therefore, detach myself from the wickedest soul, nor may I be denied identity with the most virtuous If we are the sons of the same divine essence, we must partake of the sin of every person, whether he belongs to us or to another race.

Gandhi never made any distinction between man and man. The distinctions based on religion, sex, status or anything else of the kind

did not appeal him at all. In fact through-out his life, Gandhi waged a heroic battle against such distinctions. He made every possible effort to bring about a sense of innermost harmony in every human heart.

Interpretation of History :

The third important thought of Gandhi was to challenge the materialistic interpretation of history. Marx had tried to interpret history in materialistic terms. According to him the economic factors alone accounted for the struggles and wars mentioned in the pages of history. As against this, Gandhi believed that the pages of history reveal that there has been a constant struggle between the material and spiritual forces. When the material forces try to thwart the progress of spirit, struggle becomes natural. He wrote : "The two opposing forces are wholly different in kind, the one moral and spiritual, the other physical and material. The one is infinitely superior to the other which by its very nature has an end". (Harijan, Feb. 10, 1946)

In this struggle, according to Gandhiji, ultimately the spirit becomes victorious. This spiritual force is present in every human being. But it lies dormant in most of the people and can be aroused through proper education. That is why he wrote : "That force resides in every body, man, woman, and child irrespective of colour of the skin. Only in many it lies dormant, but it is capable of being awakened by judicious straining."

This soul force tries to attain Truth the Eternal Truth. It does not rest till it has attained its objective. Therefore we find in the pages of history that it has made continuous progress. Of course this march towards progress is not yet over. But its successes cannot be ignored. For example, let us look to the dim past of humanity. Man led a solitary life then a brutish life to quote the words of Hobbes. Individual used to kill another individual to satisfy his hunger. This state was replaced by another state when man learnt cultivation. And the subsequent stages have been marked

by a closer co-operation of Mankind. This onward march of soul force shall continue till human world becomes one family.

This concept led Gandhi to evolve the ideal of Sarvodaya. This social ideal aims at the attainment of a society of human beings that shall be free from every trace of class, caste, exploitation and discrimination through the instruments of non-violence and truthfulness. Sarvodaya ideal is very particular about the fact that only that society is ideal which looks to the welfare of EVERY human being. Greatest good of the greatest number is not a healthy attitude. It should be replaced by an ideal - "The greatest good of every member."

The end and the Means :

Gandhi was of the opinion that this ideal can be attained only through non-violence and truthfulness. We cannot attain this ideal through violent means. Bloody revolutions leave a trail of animosity hatred and destruction behind them. Progress of human civilization is paralyzed under the circumstances. Hence the best course is to attain the objective through non-violence and love. "Take care of the means and the end will take care of itself." - wrote Gandhi.

This teaching of Gandhi must be remembered by the modern world which has equipped itself with the most destructive weapons in the form of H-bombs that can reduce the world in ashes within no time. Any bloody war now means destruction and annihilation of the entire world, the whole humanity. Gandhi gave us the technique of Satyagraha for getting justice. But he also added that a Satyagrahi must fulfil the following conditions :

(i) The satyagrahi must not harbour any ill-will or hatred against any creature; his heart must be pure.

(ii) The issue involved must be true and worthwhile;

(iii) The Satyagrahi must be prepared to suffer till the inherent truth comes out victorious. Gandhiji proclaimed "A Satyagraha

struggle is impossible without capital in the shape of character." And so sure was Gandhi about the efficacy of Satyagraha that he declared "Truth and Satyagraha shall never fail." Civil disobedience and Non-cooperation with the evil were parts of this Satyagraha.

I think in the modern world Satyagraha is the only means on which one can rely. And if one's character is sublime and the cause just one is bound to get success. Such a success produces a spirit of harmony and an atmosphere free from corrupting influences.

Orientation of Politics :

The only other aspect of Gandhi's personality that deserves some consideration is his emphasis on the sublimation of politics. "My politics," he wrote, "are not corrupt. They are inextricably bound up with non-violence and truth". Generally it is believed that everything is fair in Politics. In fact crookedness has become an inseparable part of politics. Gandhi tried to make politics quite virtuous. The immoral aspects were eliminated and politics with him became a mighty instrument of serving people. That is why he preached decentralization of power. Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Decentralization is the best method of fighting this danger of corruption. The value of decentralization of power has not been fully realized so far. That is why corruption has become rampant. Gandhi also stated that the state must wither away in the ultimate stage of human civilization. His plea was "The state represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul, but the state is a soulless machine. It can never be weaved from violence to which it owes its very existence". And this withering away of the state shall become possible only when man shall attain his fullest development. Every sensible state, every sensible society, and every sensible individual must make an honest effort towards the achievement of this ultimate ideal which shall mark the culmination of human progress and development.

Gandhi and some Western Thinkers :

Gandhi's ideas were no doubt rooted in Indian tradition rich with constructive colour and approach. But Gandhi was also influenced by some Western thinkers. Thoreau, Tolstoy, and Ruskin are prominent thinkers who influenced Gandhi to a very large extent. From Thoreau he learnt the motto " That government is best which governs the least. " Perhaps even Gandhi's concept of Civil Disobedience was derived from Thoreau. Actually Gandhi had some correspondence with Tolstoy. Probably Gandhi derived certain religious attitude from Tolstoy. He actually translated Ruskin's **Unto this Last** '. He has actually accepted that he was very much influenced by that work of Ruskin. But Gandhi's real greatness lies not only in accepting such influences ; his real greatness lies in translating every thought, that he liked, in concrete act. Whatever he accepted as right he expressed in his actual conduct. He gave new orientation to thinking in the domain of politics, because with his supreme self-confidence that he derived from his faith in God he could work miracles. He fought with the British but never had any ill-feeling towards the British people, and after a great struggle when he won independence from the British, he did not accept any post of power. On the other hand he preferred to serve the people in distress at Noakhali.

Let us try to adopt the thoughts of Gandhi and translate them in our actual acts. If we sincerely follow Gandhi, the individual life, the national life, and the international life shall become happy and prosperous and if we refuse to follow him, we should be prepared to be lost in the dark of destruction. The sooner we realise this fact, the better it is.

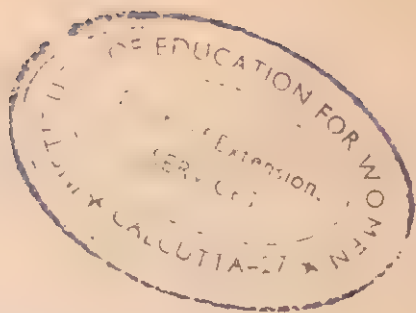
Let us not forget that Gandhi was not a visionary idealist. He had a tendency of testing every idea on the touchstone of ponderous reflection. And still further he tried, first of all to act upon a particular principle before preaching it to the world. Therefore, his thoughts deserve our cool and considerate reflection. I personally think that we should try to follow Gandhi's principles

without any hesitation. If we can follow his thoughts even to a small extent we can lay a solid foundation of real human progress. Gandhi gave us courage to think of unstereotyped and constructive line and if some people criticise him, probably this criticism emanates either from their inability to sever themselves from the tentacle of a rigid tradition, or from their incapacity to break their old deep-rooted habits. But I am sure in a world which is bubbling with a spirit of adventure like landing on the land of the moon we shall be able to find some persons who shall have the courage of thinking on untraditional lines like Gandhi and shall be bold enough to neglect the scoffing of the timid, and follow the Great Soul like Gandhi. Future of humanity is safe only with such people.

2 The philosophical and Sociological Components of Gandhism

L. P. Sinha





2 The Philosophical and Sociological Components of Gandhism

L. P. Sinha

Gandhism, like Marxism, is a complex whole in the making of which multiple and multi-dimensional factors are involved, due to which it is not always easy to categorise his thinking in terms of traditional schools of thought, philosophical, sociological or political. Gandhi was at once original and eclectic, a theoretician and a practical path-finder, a mystic and a rational thinker, a high-soaring spiritualist and yet of earth. He was an idealist, an individualist, and an anarchist at the same time. His is an amalgam of many ideas and many currents of thought, often blended harmoniously, but sometimes incongruously. It is the combination of these manifold elements in a unique manner which makes Gandhi such an attractive, fascinating and likeable figure in history of politico-philosophical ideas. The philosopher may find logical incongruities in his system, the rationalist may object to his mysticism, the secularist may object to his religious approach, and imbued with the spirit of science and modernisation one may discover too much of revivalism in him, yet somewhere somehow there is that touch in Gandhi, the charismatic leader and his ideas, which still makes him one of the most respectable figures in history.

Mahatma Gandhi was an idealist but his idealism has not the obnoxious features of extreme idealism like that of Hegel or

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Bosanquet. On the contrary, it is sober, civilised and safe like that of Green. He was an idealist in both the ontological and ethical senses of the term. In this respect the Mahatma did not claim any ingenuity, he only professed to follow the Sanatan Dharm (the Eternal Path) of the Hindus.

Gandhi, the idealist, borrowed his ideas from the Upanishads, the Vedas and the Gita. He believed in God and held that man had in him an indestructible spiritual substance called soul. Man is not only a physical entity but also a spiritual being. Any lasting social-economic organisation, therefore, must do justice to both these aspects of man.

Following the Vedantic ideal, he believed in liberation (Moksha) as the ultimate end of human existence and held that every individual must strive for this ideal but he differs essentially from the Vedantic current (or rather distortions of it) in that according to him liberation which is the ultimate ideal for human existence can be attained by living together with one's fellow beings in society in this world and not by retiring to a cave in the Himalayas. Again the Mahatma insisted that he carried his cave with him. An ascetic and rigorous moral disciplinarian, Gandhi was not a moral recluse. Be that it may this constituted the most distinctive feature of Gandhi's socialised ethics. In this respect Gandhi differed from idealistic ethicists not only in India but also in the West; and resembled Green who argued that a truly moral life is social life, and that a true moral life is a life lived not in isolation from one's fellow beings but a life of true human brotherhood, friendship, comradeship, communion and love. Herein also lies the natural, ethical justification for social existence but this does not mean that social existence is the end of man. Society is a means, a condition for the ultimate moral end of man. It helps man realise his moral self, but can't be an end itself. For that reason the life of the individual is not totally submerged in the social life. He lives in society and yet out of it because his real self, his real aspirations are beyond; but because a healthy physical organism is essential for a healthy spiritual life, therefore, society is an

external condition necessary for good life. Individuality and sociability thus go together in any ideal human congregation.

Gandhi's theistic idealism, however, is postulated uncritically and without any attempts at arguments in its favour. He assumed it, and like many others, held that theistic experience was more a felt experience, a felt mode of existence than an argued, demonstrated and demonstratable truth. But God is truth and truth is God, about this the Mahatma was confident.

While Gandhi's ethical idealism extricates him from the extremes of idealism, it still keeps him open to criticism on the ground that while it does take note of material conditions of life and of social existence, still in an idealism like that of Gandhi which upholds liberation as the ultimate end of man, worldly life will, after all, tend to receive only a secondary, a stepmotherly treatment. Gandhi's own rigorous and ascetic life is a proof of the argument. A philosophical stand of the type may in the long run lead to a life of self-abnegation in this world.

But Gandhi, the idealist, was also an individualist, not an individualist in the 19th century laissez-faire sense of the term with its premises of materialistic, atomistic egoism, but in the sense that he valued individuality, and spontaneity, and a life of self-help and self-initiative above all. Like Green he held that a truly moral life is a life of free will, self-earned; self-developing and self-actualising life in which others can be but of indirect help only. Society, nevertheless, is indispensable for moral man.

Gandhi, however, differs in an important respect from writers like Aristotle and Green who trace the necessity of the State in the natural sociability and morality of man. In all these thinkers this transition from man, the social animal, to man the political animal has unsatisfactory explanation. Here Gandhi joins the company of philosophical anarchists like Thoreau and Tolstoy, who argued the state to be unnecessary on moral grounds. A moral life, having

free will and spontaneity as its basis, is quite inconsistent with the State, a coercive apparatus based upon force, fear and violence. State means distraction, compulsion and coercion; morality is love, union and friendship. Moreover, organisation of State leads to concentration of power and Gandhi was opposed to such concentration as it went against individuality and self-expression of the individual. Thus State and moral life are antithetical concepts. Gandhi believed that in an ideal State, therefore, there would be no State because there would be no necessity of the State.

But Gandhi's treatment of the problem as to why there is State society is not so satisfactory; his views verge on the individualistic notion that the State is a necessary evil due to certain transient weaknesses in human nature, which, however, would disappear in an ideal State of society. But Gandhi does not give a satisfactory explanation as to why there are weaknesses in human nature.

Gandhi, the individualist, differs in important respects from the nineteenth century individualists like Benthamite utilitarians in as much as he was opposed to their egoistic premises which hold that human beings are selfish by nature and are prompted by the considerations of pleasure and pain. Gandhi's individual is actuated by altruistic motives. Moreover he was opposed to the utilitarian conception of sensuous pleasure as the end of man and, therefore, as the end of social, economic, and political institutions. But if pleasure is taken in its wider Vedantic connotation of bliss or happiness purporting to total satisfaction of all the faculties of human personality then happiness is the goal of life according to Gandhi. Gandhi's idealism was opposed to the materialistic basis of the utilitarians.

For these reasons Gandhi was critical of the Benthamite ideal of the greatest happiness of the greatest number as the end of social, economic and political institutions. He countered this ideal with his own goal of Sarvodaya which literally meant upliftment and development of all the faculties of all the individuals in the

society. Even if one single individual was left out of the scheme or remained unaffected by it Gandhi would not call it a Sarvodaya Society.

As contrasted with the utilitarian ideal of the greatest happiness of the greatest number the Gandhian ideal of Sarvodaya, theoretically speaking, seems to be more fascinating and a far more superior idea but it is open to doubt if pragmatically speaking also it is on a sounder basis; for despite its mathematical guzzle, the Benthamite ideal is easy to understand.

Sarvodaya seems to be a highly inspiring and worth striving ideal but some of its postulates together with the means prescribed for its realisation tend to render it a difficult ideal to attain. A moral perfectionist, the Mahatma's stress was more on individual perfection and individual endeavour as a condition for the betterment of society than on an institutional approach which the Mahatma dubbed as one-sided. But if the institutionalist exaggerates his case, the perfectionist too, overstates and overstresses his point. The truth lies in a harmonious blending of the two with some primacy to the institutional approach. Historically speaking, too, the moral perfectionist approach has been tried and found inadequate to meet the situation. The fact of the matter is that the individual tends to be helpless in his efforts to develop and perfect himself in an inequitable, non-egalitarian and non-libertarian society. The individual does not function in a vacuum but in a concrete social situation which places certain limitations upon him. The relation between the individual and his environment is of a functional action-interaction type in which both continuously influence each other.

Another component of Gandhism which is not without some difficulty is his theory of property in general and his trusteeship theory in particular. Like Locke and Green Gandhi held that property in general, and landed property in particular belonged to God or Nature - Gopal as Gandhi called - and that the owners of property should only act as trustees but this leaves open a number

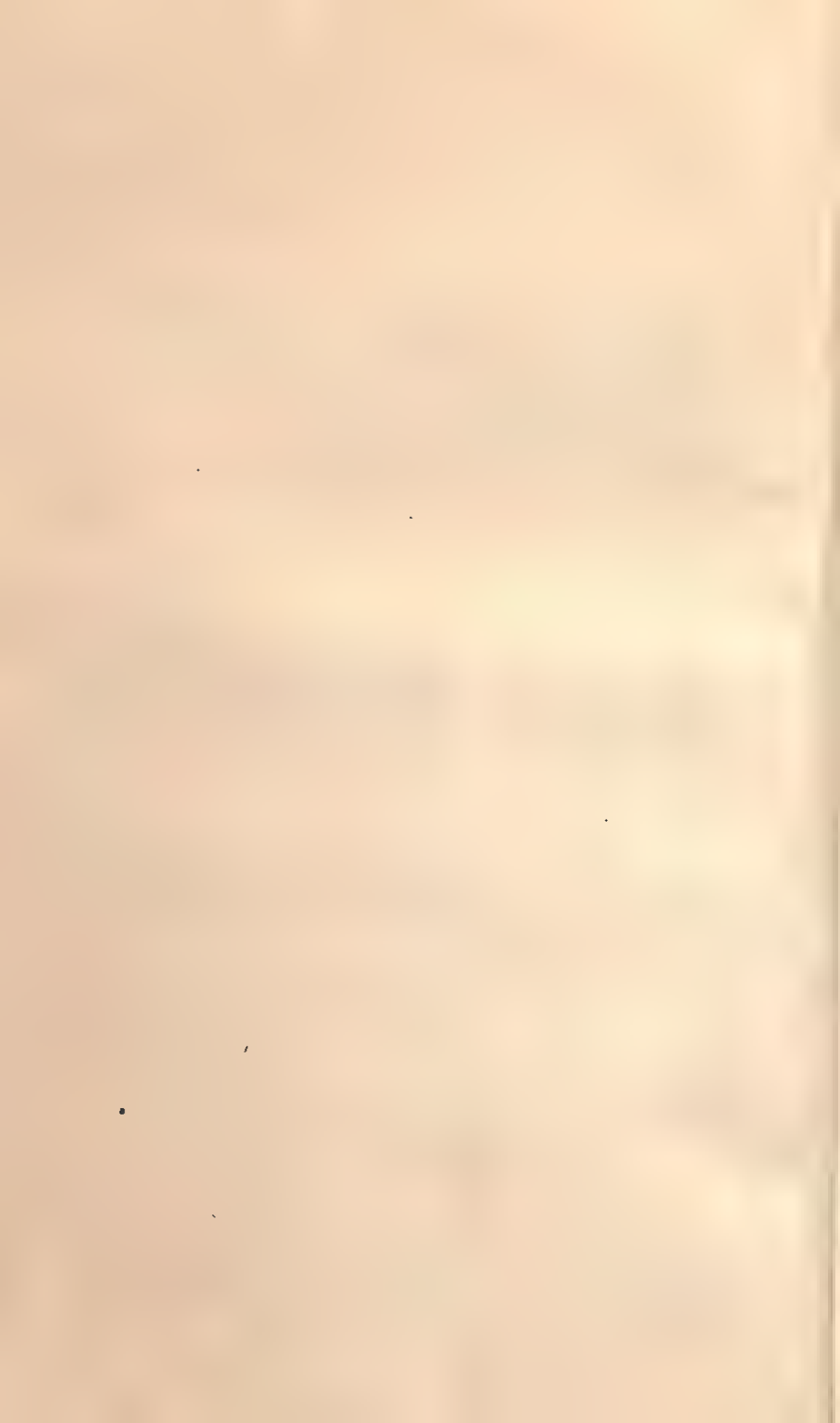
of questions. Why should the propertied classes act as trustees? They can very well assert that their property, being a product of their brain, brawn and capital, wholly belongs to them and there is no justification for taking it away from them or putting serious restrictions upon it. But if, on the contrary, their property was not really theirs, then why should they be allowed to keep it? There seem to be only two alternatives; either to prove that their property was unjustly required and then to demand social ownership or to admit that it was rightfully theirs and then to allow them to have full use of it. Probably the sociological aspect of this deep-rooted problem of human society could not attract Gandhi's serious attention. He was concerned more with evolving a harmonious relationship between capital and labour, and between land-lords and tenant based upon equal-partnership theory.

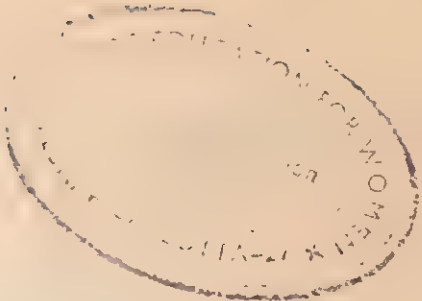
Another aspect of Gandhism which attracts critical attention is his attitude to industrialisation and modernisation. Though Gandhi had antipathy to both on moral ground as well as on the ground of the interests of the individual, his liberty and self-initiative, but it might be argued that it is not industrialisation in itself, and the use of large-scale machine that leads to concentration, but rather the use that is made of large-scale machinery, the form of industrialisation and the vital problem of ownership which are the crux of the problem. It must, however, be admitted that with his forthright views on the subject, Gandhi did focus our attention on one of the most knottty problems of industrial civilisation.

These critical notes about Gandhism do not detract from its intrinsic, lasting value, though it must also be acknowledged that Gandhi the man of action was far superior to Gandhi the man of ideas. When on move Gandhi gave the impression of the man sublime, the man profound and the man noble.

3 Social Structure of Gandhian State

Usba Kiran Mehra





3 Social Structure of the Gandhian State

Usha Kiran Mehra

Mahatma Gandhi has been recognized as the man of 'the age' all over the world. Perhaps there is no other person about whom and about whose doing so much has been written and spoken as that of this Universalist Humanitarian and the Father of the Indian Nation. Like all great, good and noble men Gandhiji did not have the good fortune to be properly understood. While in South Africa Gandhiji formulated his philosophy of life and work and attitude towards the affairs of the world. He wrote one book, Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule. Though this book went through several editions during his life time, he never felt the necessity of revising it in the least. It is the quietness of his thinking, writing and doing in the last days of his life.

In 1909, Gokhale, speaking in support of a resolution at the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress and pledging support to the cause of Indians in South Africa, he used the following words while referring to Gandhi :

"It is one of the privileges of my life that I know Mr. Gandhi intimately and I can tell you that a purer, a nobler, a braver, a more exalted spirit has never moved on this earth. Mr. Gandhi is one of those men who living on austere simple life themselves and devoted to all the highest principles of love to their fellow being and truth and justice, touch the eyes of their weaker brethren as with magic

and give a new vision. He is a man who may be described as a man among men, a hero among heroes, a patriot among patriots and we may well say that in him Indian humanity at the present time has really reached its high water-mark."

This was said as far back as in 1909. After six years Gandhiji was to come to India and take it on himself to train Indians in non-violence and Satyagraha as the best method of not only achieving political freedom but Socio-economic uplift and human equality.

The Social structure of the Gandhian State is founded on the moral ideal of self-realisation which inspires and moulds the conception of life in all spheres. The Socio-economic life is regulated by 'Varna-asrama' Dharma. Gandhiji says "This law of 'varma' and 'ashrama' is to be traced to our most ancient scriptures -to Vedas."

Gandhiji derived it from Bhagwad Gita according to which the Varna Dharma is determined by man's character and functions. The Bhagwad Gita does not mention heredity. Gandhiji says, "But it lays down principles and leaves you to find the application for yourself. The Gita does talk of Varna being according to 'Guna' and 'Karma' but these are inherited by birth." In following the laws of Vernas, one has to follow the hereditary and traditional calling of one's forefathers. Gandhiji adds, "I believe that just as every one inherits a particular form so does he inherit the particular characteristics and qualities of his progenitors and to make this admission is to conserve one's energies. That frank admission if he will act up to it, would put a legitimate curb upon our material ambitions and thereby our energy is set free for extending the field of spiritual research and spiritual evolution.

But Varna is only a rough guide and is essentially voluntary in nature. Gandhiji says. "In this law, there is no question of compelling any person to follow the parental occupation against his or her aptitude; that is to say, there can be no compulsion from without."

Varna is not caste, it is a class. Gandhiji says, "I believe that every man is born in this world with certain definite limitations which he cannot overcome. From a careful observation of those limitations the law of Varna was deduced. It establishes certain spheres of action for certain people with certain tendencies. This avoided all unworthy competition, Whilst recognising limitations, the law of Varna admitted of no distinctions of high or low; on the one hand it guaranteed to each the fruits of his labourers and on the other it prevented him from pressing upon his neighbour. This great law has been degraded and fallen into disrepute. But my conviction is that an ideal social order will only be evolved when the implications of this law are fully understood and given effect to." The law of 'Varna' implies the adoption of hereditary profession on the one hand and the performance of that function in the spirit of duty on the other. Although the 'Varna' is determined by birth, it can only be retained by observing its obligations.

The Varna is supplemented and strengthened by Ashrama Dharma, Gandhiji says, "Hinduism lays down four 'Ashrams' or stages - the life of 'Brahmachari' (continent student), the life of a 'Grihastha' (house - holder), the life of 'Vanaprastha' (who has retired) and the life of a 'Sanyasi' (renunciator) - through which every Hindu has to pass to fulfil his purpose in life.....And as the four stages represent a ladder of growth and are interdependent, one cannot help to the stage of a 'Vanaprasthi' or a 'Sanyasi' unless he or she fulfilled the law of the first the 'ashramas'. Varna Ashram provides that type of individual liberty which consists for Gandhi, not in an escape from limitations but in voluntary acceptance of obligations.

To the ideal of 'Varnashrama Dharma' Gandhiji added the ethical ideals of 'Bread Labour' Non-possession, Non-stealing and Swadeshi.

Gandhiji borrowed the ideal of 'Bread labour' from Tolstoy and Ruskin and he confirmed the notion from Gita and Bible. He says,

“ The law that to live man must work hard, first come home to me upon reading Tolstoy’s writing on Bread labour. But even before that I had begun to pay homage to it after reading Ruskin’s ‘Unto This Last’. The divine law, that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands, was first stressed by a Russian writer named T. M. Bondaref. Tolstoy advertised it and gave it wider publicity”. Bread labour implies voluntary preformance of duty and not through compulsion. Gandhiji gave significant importance to manual labour for training in moral discipline. In case of mental workers, they are not only to earn their livelihood by their profession which the law of ‘ Varna ’ implies, but they must exert physically so as to perform some productive function for the sake of service to the community.

Gandhiji defined education as “ an all round drawing out of the best in child and man body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is only one of the means whereby men and women can be educated. Gandhiji believed that an all around development of mind can be attained only when it goes with the education of the physical and spiritual faculties of the child. In this respect he is very much similar to the English liberals who understand education in a wider sense and as not merely literary. Gandhiji put more emphasis on the moral as distinguished from the intellectual aim of education. He says, “ Literary training by itself, adds not an inch to one’s moral height and character and character building is independent of literary training ”. To character building, Gandhiji calls, ‘ the education of the heart ’ which cannot be imparted through books. He says. “ It can only be done through the living touch of the teacher. And who are the teachers in the primary and even secondary schools ? Are they men and women of faith and character ? Have they themselves received the training of the heart ? Are they ever expected to take care of the permanent element in the boys and girls placed under their charges ? Is not the method of engaging teachers of lower schools an effective bar against character ? Do the teachers get even a living wage ? And we know, that the teachers of primary schools are not selected for their

patriotism. They only come who cannot find any other employment."

Gandhiji's scheme of education covered the period from seven years to fourteen years. He considers handicrafts to be essential together with physical drill, drawing and music. Education in handicraft teaches dignity of labour and combines learning and doing.

Gandhiji's basic education should be self-supporting. He says, "My Nai Talim" (new education) is not dependent on money. The running expenses of this education should come from the educational process itself." Gandhiji appeared to be influenced by the difficulties of spreading education throughout India, if it were to cost money.

Gandhiji's idea is a little similar to that of Bentham, though his idea was based on the ground of utility. He favoured the suppression of classical teaching and preferred scientific teaching.



4 Gandhi's ideas of a Planned Society

P. N. Khare

4 Gandhi's Ideas of a Planned Society

P. N. Khare

All societies change - Some slowly, some more rapidly. On occasions this change is initiated by some outside force; an earthquake, an invasion or the importation of a new idea. All societies are undergoing some process of internal evolution. New ideas are formed, new customs arise, novel social groups are born, and old ones die. But not all the parts of a Society change at an equal rate, and not all parts of a society are equally productive to change.¹ Ever since the dawn of Independence, India has made rapid progress through the Five Year Plans. She could not achieve much social progress due to the Nature of Indian Society. It was Mahatma Gandhi who tried to eradicate social evils of Indian Society and imaged a future society. In the present paper the author has tried to compile in brief Bapu's ideas of Planned Society.

Mahatma Gandhi received on his appearance in Indian Public Life in 1920. His multi-faced personality gave continuity to the religious-rational as well as the Politically rebellious trends in our public life.

1. The Village Reconstruction

Gandhiji said "Not unless you switch your minds off the cities to the villages can you serve them. You must realise that it is not

1. Schneider Eugene V. "Industrial Sociology" 1957 P. 485

not cities that make India, but the villagers and that you can not reconstruct them unless you revive the village life with its defunct handicraft.

In independent India rural community must achieve its own welfare and thus point the way to the welfare of Mankind. Gandhian Constructive worker can give attention to the following seven point programme of Rural Welfare.

(1) More food through better agriculture and an equitable redistribution of land through peaceful methods of persuasion.

(2) Quality food through mass education in the elementary rules of dietetics at the village level.

(3) Better health through the above and through a rational sanitation drive.

(4) Improvement and reorganisation of cottage and village industries.

(5) Promotions co-operation, Panchayats to be real.

(6) Promoting education of Adults in particular and liberal education should be available to every boy and girl without any discrimination of caste or class.

(7) Moral rearmament of the people through cultural and recreational programmes deriving inspiration from the past traditions of India and going forward to link up with the past traditions of the modern world.

None of these are new items. But they must be taken up in a new spirit. Special priorities should be given to Rural Youth programme and out-of-school education which will prepare a ruralite a good citizen.

Eradication of Untouchability

“Untouchability as practised is the greatest blot on Hinduism (with apologies to Sanatanists). It is against the fundamental

principles of humanity, it is against the dictates of reason that a man should, by mere reason of birth be for ever regarded as an untouchable." It was not until Mahatma's fast over the Communal Award and the Poona Pact in the year 1932 that the Movement got all India recognition. It was not new problem to Gandhiji as he had to face a similar problem in South Africa and he opened his Sabarmati Ashram to Harijans.¹ Gandhiji said "unless and until we be friend the Harijan, unless and until we treat him as our own brother, we can not treat humanity as one brotherhood. The whole movement for the removal of untouchability is a movement for the establishment of universal brotherhood and nothing less."

As soon as Babu released from jail he undertook an All India tour from 7th November 1933 to end of July 1934. His tour was a success.

With the advent of independence Indian Constitution has gauranted a lot of facilities for untouchables. Under Article 17 of the Constitution untouchability is abolished. A raference of Articles 330, 332, 335, 341 etc. is worth Mentioning.

We all do agree that untouchability is practised even today in Indian villages, but we should not forget that "it is mental outlook." Moreover social customs which have taken deep roots in the Hindu Social Organisation are bound to take time to disappear.

The Role of Women

It has to be admitted, however, that Hindu Society was on the whole unfair and unsympathetic to women during the last two

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- 1 The term 'Harijan' was coined by Gandhiji to denote the then existing untouchables or the scheduled caste (coined by Government of India) at the suggestion of a Harijan who quoted Narsimha Mehta, the Gujrati poet, who has used the word in his work. It means God's chosen. Late Dr. G. S. Ghurye, Prof. of Sociology, Bombay University, called them 'Backward Hindus.'

thousand years. They could have no education worth the name and could hardly take any part in social and public life. Mahatma Gandhi brought them outside their homes with the discovery of "Satyagraha".¹ In 1920, 1930, 1942 and onwards a large number of women came outside the four walls of their families took part in National Movements, gave inspiration to Men folk, and worked shoulder to shoulder with men. Today Indian women have occupied various posts from Prime Minister to a Maid servant. They are Ministers, Educationists, Doctors, Engineers, Judges, Air Hostesses, Sociologists, Economists etc. No career is now closed to our women. Women have gained power due to their Education, Economic Independence and Social Legislations.

In the words of Gandhiji woman is 'Noblest of God's creation, the Mother, Maker, and silent leader of Man. Hence in a planned society fifty percent population² should not be neglected. Let us protect her honour.

Non-violence and World Peace

It is an irony that apostles of non-violence should have died at the hands of assassins³ but their ideas live on.

In words of Dr. Martin Luther King "The way of Non-violence means a willingness to suffer and sacrifice. It may mean

1 Meaning of Satyagraha according to Bapuji - "Truth (Satya) implies love, and firmness (agraha) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force. I thus began to call the Indian Movement "Satyagraha" that is to say, the force which is born of Truth and love or Non-violence".

2 Women constitute fifty percent population of our country.

3 Mahatma Gandhi was murdered twenty years ago and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered on April 4, 1968.

going to jail.....it may even mean physical death. But if physical death is the price that a man must pay to free his children and his white brethren from a permanent death on the spirit, then nothing could be more redemptive.¹ Gandhiji used the technique of non-violent pressure or passive resistance successfully to achieve the independence of India from British rule. However, his concern with social evils in India was as great as his concern with the political independence of India. In fact, one of the earliest uses of Satyagrah in India was directed against the prevalent practice of untouchability in a village in South India. Thus Gandhiji asserted the importance of the dignity and worth of the Human person and the principle of equality of all human beings regardless of caste and creed. The pursuit of Social Justice in India was an abiding concern of Mahatma Gandhi.²

Gandhiji in keeping with his own traditions evolved a method, a plan and a philosophy for world peace. We sociologists agree on his belief that progressive non-violence and truth, which have civilized individual in his social relationships and inter-group relations, must guide International relations. Nothing could be achieved of Vietnam war so far. War and war and loss of humanity.

Today we live in violent world--says U thant, " Everywhere there is a mood of restlessness and desire for change. I have often expressed the view that if people in authority the world over can not read the writing on the wall and accept the necessity for change inevitably change will be brought about by violent means....." " Changes brought about by peaceful means are not only more desirable but more durable."³

1 King Martin Luther " Stride Towards Freedom " (Harper & Row Publishers, 1958)

[portion excerpted by "The American Review" 3, April 1969 p.8]

2 U. Thant, " Non - violence and world peace " in Mahatma Gandhi : 100 years, p. 372.

3 U. Thant, Ibid pp. 373-74

The time ahead will show that Gandhiji's faith in the efficacy of non-violent pressure as an 'agent for peaceful change' is as justified to day all over the world as it was in his time in India.

Social Problems :

Gandhiji has expressed his opinion on social problems also. He does not believe in unnatural birth control. He was a Staunch believer of 'self-control'. His principle of 'Brahmacharya' or self control should be brought to the notice of the youths.

Through Satyagraha he tried to control the sale of liquor, introduced 'Nira'.¹ Similarly Gandhiji firmly planned for welfare of family, age of marriage, child welfare and various other social problems.

Concluding Remarks :

The 20th century presents a much more complex picture. During 1901 to 1920 the social, economic and political situation in India had grown worse. The service rendered by social reformers and social institution during British period was too inadequate. They (social reformers) have to face lot of difficulties. Moreover their efforts were personal rather than "group work". It was Gandhiji who organised groups and oriented planned change for Indian Society. Gandhiji introduced "Satyagraha" "Self-help" or "Swavalamban" and started constructive programme for the social and economic betterment of Indian populace.

R. R. Diwakar says, "Generally great man can be said of two types those who are great in their own time only and those who are great for all time. Gandhiji undoubtedly belongs to the latter type, at the same time he was great in his time too". Buddha, Jesus

1 Prohibition is a highly controversial issue in the modern time, hence discussion is dropped due to lack of space.

Christ, Socrates were not very much known perhaps beyond their own communities in their time, but now they occupy the highest places in world stage. Gandhiji became a world celebrity in his own time and now he belongs to eternity. Gandhiji was already an Institution in his own life time and now he is the originator of a whole system of Ideas and Ideals which can guide human Society. He was a man of action who puts his ideas into practice. Gandhiji's view of planned society dealt in brief in this paper are all in full evidence in India today. Government of India bears the unmistakable stamp of his thought.

Other Significant Aids

The author has also made use of the following works :

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2. Diwakar, R. R. "Gandhiji's Basic Ideas And Some Modern Problems"
3. Kripalani, J. B. "Gandhian Thought" 1961
4. Khare, P. N. "A Study of the Family Life of Women Workers"
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5. Planning Commission, "Social Welfare in India" 1955
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6. Pocket Gandhi Series No. 9 and 14
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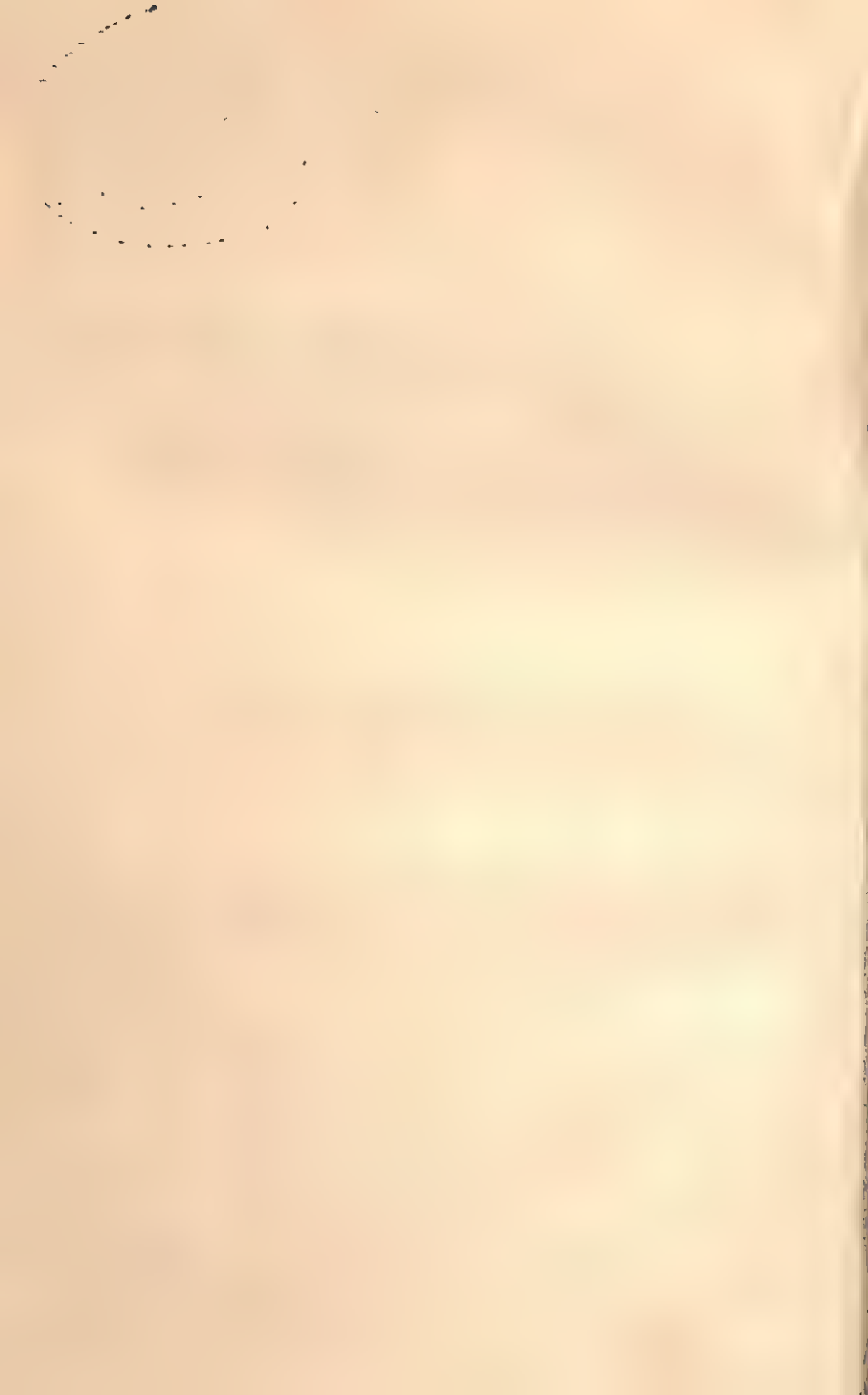
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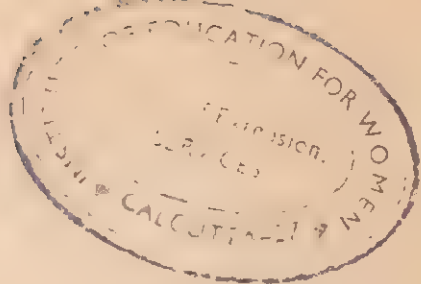
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5 Gandhiji and Untouchability

A. R. Wadia





5 Gandhiji and Untouchability

A. R. Wadia

The world to-day is celebrating the centenary of Gandhiji's birth, Indians cannot but feel proud of having produced a great world figure. But it has to be noted as a tragic fact that the work for which he lived and died has remained incomplete. His life was simple almost to the extent of being primitive, but it was not free from contradictions, apparent or real. Philosophically his life was centred in a consuming love for humanity at large and for the suffering underdogs among them in particular. This found expression in two main directions: asserting the rights of Indians as individuals whether in South Africa or in their own country and striving for the abolition of untouchability in India as a blot on Hinduism. He achieved remarkable success in both these endeavours which has left the world gaping with wonder and admiration. But to Gandhiji himself victories on both these fronts were only pyrrhic victories. Indians with Negroes in South Africa are still the victims of the apartheid policy of white South Africa. India is free and independent but only as a vivisected truncated entity. Untouchability has been abolished on paper, but untouchability is still alive in the hearts of millions of Hindus and the sufferings and humiliations inflicted on the untouchables at large are still there, only they have become more glaring and glowing because for millenia untouchability was accepted by sections of Hindus as a divine dispensation but not now. Among the oppressors a few great lights have flukered. Buddha stood out as the Lord of Mercy to

whom the untouchables were as dear as the touchables. Great mystics like the Alvars and Nanda in the South, Kabir and Soordas in the North, Meera and Narsimha Mehta in Gujarat and Eknath and Tukaram in Maharashtra sang immortal songs preaching the oneness of God and of human beings as His children. Great religious leaders like Basava in the South and Nanak in the North arose revolts against the orthodoxy of old Hinduism. But their followers too fell under the spell of caste. Islam and Christianity claimed converts by millions. The nineteenth century under the influence of the British produced a band of intrepid reformers whether as Brahmo Samajists or Arya Samajists. The latest knightly figure to enter the fray was Mahatma Gandhi and the object of this paper is to study how far he succeeded and if he failed, as he has apparently failed, the cause of this failure.

Gandhiji has been generally spoken of a great rebel and even as a revolutionary. But he claimed to remain a Hindu and an orthodox Hindu to boot. This has given rise to a good few contradictions not too easy to overcome. He himself has placed on record that at the age of twelve he had the conviction that untouchability was a sin. But to please his mother he would have a bath after any casual contact with an untouchable. This conviction grew through years as his own philosophy of humanism developed. At a Conference of the Untouchables in 1921 he said : "I do not want to attain Moksha. I do not want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings and the affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from that miserable condition." Many Hindus may have given expression to sentiments of this type, but it was his privilege to practise what he preached, when he brought in an untouchable girl who practically became a member of his family. By this time he had fully qualified for the honour of being excommunicated for a number of sins not excluding the sin of having crossed the seas.

When Gandhiji emerged as the political leader of India after the senseless tragedy of Jallianwalla Bagh he made the political

emancipation of India his main mission in life. Everything else had to be subordinated to it. But his **jehad** against the British was accompanied by his constructive programme which along with the spread of the cult of charkha and khadi included the abolition of untouchability. With this end in view he championed the cause of temples being thrown open to untouchables. He himself had outgrown the need to visit temples, for he had his open air meetings for prayers which functioned as temples and political platform to rouse the slumbering patriotism of Indians. He did succeed in getting a few temples opened to untouchables but it has proved to be boon of doubtful value. Once the temples were supposed to have been defiled by the entry of the untouchables, the orthodox gave up going to these temples. Whether the idols themselves were really defiled or continued to have their religious potency has remained a matter of faith. Any way so far as law is concerned all temples are open to the untouchables. But this has not led to the purification of the untouchables, for their social disabilities still remain to the shame of India.

We Indians have a pathetic faith in the power of words to overcome evils. Even Gandhi was not above this weakness. He thought by calling untouchables Harijans or the children of God he would raise their status. But stony hearts cannot be changed by words and the Harijans remain as untouchable as ever before. To focus the conscience of Hindus on this problem he started the Harijan Sevak Sangh. No institution can really flourish without having the public at the back of it. Harijan Sevak Sangh can certainly be credited with good will and a certain amount of success, but negligible on the whole. Even financially it has not had requisite support. Dr. Ambedkar complains that out of a total of a crore and a quarter at the credit of the Swaraj Fund barely Rs. 48,000 were spared for the cause of the Harijans, a measly sum indeed.

Gandhiji's influence certainly succeeded in making the abolition of untouchability a part of our Constitution. Their representation has been guaranteed in all our legislative bodies, whether at the

centre in the states. There are Harijan ministers in every cabinet. There is nothing in law to prevent one of them becoming the President or the Prime Minister of India. There is a Commissioner for Backward and Scheduled castes (another euphemism for the ugly fact of untouchables.) He produces reports year after year which continue to highlight the sufferings of the untouchables in villages.

As recounted above there is a good deal to be put to the credit side of Gandhiji. But Dr. Ambedkar and millions of his followers do not see in Gandhiji anything but an enemy of the untouchables or at best a lukewarm champion of their cause. I have not read a book written with more bitterness of heart than **WHAT CONGRESS AND GANDHI HAVE DONE TO THE UNTOUCHABLES** by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, an untouchable himself, but with a massive erudition that has gone the making of him not merely as a leader of the Harijans, but also as a great constitutional lawyer who piloted our Constitution in the Constituent Assembly. I literally got a shock when I found one of his chapters having a subtitle : **Beware of Mr. Gandhi**. In a little foot-note in that chapter on page 251 I find myself castigated as one of those who carry on propaganda " in order to beguile the Untouchables."

This has made me dive a little deeper into the work of Gandhiji for the Untouchables. Why did he fail to undo untouchability and to win the confidence of the Untouchables *en masse*.

The history of U. S. A. affords one historical parallel to what has happened in India. A hundred years ago Abraham Lincoln had to face the same dilemma as Gandhiji had to face in India. Lincoln like a good Christian was whole-heartedly against the slavery of Negroes. He was as unwilling to be a master of a slave as to be a slave himself. When he stood for election as the President of U. S. A. every body took for granted that his success in the election would usher in the emancipation of millions of Negro slaves. civil war began his election brought about a revolt of the Southern States out of sheer fear that their secession would destroy the unity of the

U. S. A. and perpetuate slavery. He felt that his first duty as an American was to save the Union. As a lover of peace and as a lover of mankind he loathed the very idea of war. But circumstances forced his hands and the man of peace had to do his duty as the Commander in Chief of the armed forces of U. S. A. God smiled on his efforts. Victory came to the Union. He succeeded because he never faltered in achieving his aim. To an American who pleaded that he should give up his idea of abolishing slavery in order to save the Union He boldly replied :

“ If there be those who would not save the Union, unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery.

If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it. If I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that.”

Nothing could be clearer than this avowal that if he had to choose between the preservation of the Union and the abolition of slavery he would prefer the preservation of the Union. That was greatness, that was statesmanship. Even to-day his exquisitely beautiful monument in Washington bears witness to that spirit which actuated Lincoln. There is determination in his steadfast eyes and firmness in his chin and the walls around look down upon him with his whole Gettysburg speech, the greatest and the most inspiring piece of oratory that ever came forth from the lips of man.

Gandhiji found the same predicament confronting him. He was not in a position to make the abolition of untouchability the end-all and be-all of his life. The liberation of his country from the yoke of the British came to be his first concern, as the preservation of the Union had come to be Abraham Lincoln's. Gandhiji started

life with full faith in British justice. Even when Jullianwala Bagh atrocities made him lose that faith and he had to launch his Satyagraha movement of non-cooperation and civil disobedience he had the glimmering consciousness that he was dealing with a "decent people". In this colossal struggle with the British he had to have the whole of India behind him. He hoped to win over the Muslim support by his support of the Khilaffat movement of the Ali Brothers. He spoke out for the abolition of untouchability. The opposition of the Muslims and the Untouchables was the trump card the British had to oppose the demands of the Indian National Congress. Dr. Ambedkar is fond of posing the question why Gandhiji never undertook a fast unto death on behalf of the Untouchables. But Gandhiji was shrewd enough to know his limitations and that such a fast would not have succeeded in dethroning the centuries-old prejudices of orthodox Hindus. The fast that he did undertake after the declaration of the British Government in favour of granting separate representation to the Untouchables was really a fast in support of the unity of the Hindus rather than in the interests of the Untouchables as such. The efforts of Rajaji and the reasonableness of Dr. Ambedkar were responsible for the Poona Pact which made Gandhiji break his fast. But it was a pyrrhic victory at best, for as Dr. Ambedkar gloats over, the Poona Pact did give separate representation to his community. As a matter of practical politics nobody can blame Gandhiji for not having done more for the Untouchables than he did upto the time Independence was achieved. The acid test for Gandhiji would have come after Independence as it did in the case of Abraham Lincoln after his successful emergence out of the Civil War. Once the Union was saved he was honest enough to keep his word and the emancipation of the Negro Slaves followed. An assassin's bullet took Gandhiji's life within six months after Independence. Whether he would have felt like undertaking a fast unto death for the abolition of untouchability in practice and not merely by legislation, which has proved so infructuous, it is anybody's guess.

There is another reason why Gandhiji failed to win the complete confidence of Dr. Ambedkar and his followers. Though Gandhiji

repudiated untouchability and had the courage to declare that he would rather see Hinduism die than that untouchability should live, he never gave up his theoretical belief in the caste system as such. This can only be considered as a noble inconsistency which he displayed by breaking every rule of the orthodox caste system. Caste system stands or falls with the observance of heredity in occupations, marriage with only the sub-caste concerned, and dining only with members of the sub-caste concerned. Gandhiji in the spirit of a true reformer broke every one of these prohibitions. Though born a Vaishya he played the role of a Brahmin becoming a teacher of mankind. He was not averse to being a sweeper. He played the role of a Kshatriya too, though of a non-violent variety. He blessed the marriage of a Brahmin lady with a Vaishya, even though that Vaishya was his own son. He had no objection to dining with any one whether a Hindu or Muslim or Christian or Parsi. And yet Gandhiji differed from all previous reformers by defending the caste system as such. He gave it full credit for having preserved Hinduism against all conquerors. He was prepared to abolish all sub-castes but he would keep the structure of the four-fold caste in its ancient purity. What he failed to realise was that the Panchamas, the fifth caste, was a logical appendage of caste, for the ancient Aryans refused to accept the Panchamas within the Hindu fold and they naturally remained outsiders. There is good logic behind the claim of the orthodox Hindus that the Untouchables are not Hindus. So the question : Are the Untouchables Hindus ? is neither meaningless nor superfluous. It is only in the age of democracy with its adult franchise that sixty millions of Untouchables came to be looked upon as a political asset and it was in the interest of political Hindu, to claim that the Untouchables are Hindus. Gandhiji as the greatest political leader of India stood up against separate representation being accorded to them for that would reduce the number of Hindus. It may be that he was truly interested in their welfare and he wanted all Hindus to do their duty by them. Dr. Ambedkar with thousands of years of Indian History behind him knew that the Untouchables had never would get a fair deal from the orthodox caste Hindus and he had to stand up for the

right of his people to have separate representation like the Muslims as the only safeguard, if the community was to progress. Gandhiji's defence of caste system weakened his championship of the Untouchables.

Why did Gandhiji defend the caste system as such ? His zeal to win over Muslims to the Congress side had already made many Hindus his enemies and one of them ultimately succeeded in killing him. His good will for the Untouchables also cost him the loss of the good will of the orthodox and Gandhiji could not afford to antagonise them more. The path way of a reformer is strewn with thorns and Gandhiji could not be an exception. The politically-minded Hindus knew that only he could deliver goods and made full use of his prestige all the world over and his wonderful will power and accepted his Constructive Programme as a part of politics, but the heart of most of them was set on driving the British out. Once this was done the Constructive Programme was left to take care of itself with legal sanctions behind them but no will to enforce them. It will remain a tragedy in the history of India that the moment of India's greatest political triumph - and that was really Gandhiji's triumph-left him a lonely figure to mourn the loss of his Muslim brethren. But for his intense desire to be accepted as a good Hindu by the most orthodox Hindus he could have avoided his defence of caste as an eternal institution and he might have rallied all the millions of Untouchables as his genuine followers.

The abolition of slavery in America has not solved the Negro problem. It exists and has developed in a very virulent form, threatening a new civil war between the whites and the blacks. But thanks to the co-operation of many friendly whites Negroes have grown to be highly educated. Once free they developed a will to be as a great people by themselves. With leaders like Booker Washington they have developed their own institutions : schools and colleges and universities and hospitals. They have produced great lawyers, scientists, educationists, musicians. They have proved to the hilt

that they can be the equals of the whites. Unfortunately the white prejudice against the Negroes has not completely died out. There are Negro slums. They are under-paid. There is poverty. But with all these handicaps the Negroes are looking up.

The Untouchables in India will have to follow the trail of the American Negroes. They will have to make maximum use of all the educational facilities that are open to them and if need be create their own institution Gandhiji did not like the idea of their undertaking any satyagrah against the higher castes but they may have to do so. Their path to progress is not easy. They will have to produce many more leaders of Dr. Ambedkar's calibre. Law and ethics are on their side. If Indians develop as real democrats they must look upon the Untouchables as their equals in asserting their rights and fulfilling their duties.

Caste or no caste, untouchability must go. It cannot be denied that the British were their friends, who treated them as human beings. The work of the Christian missionaries cannot be overlooked. It is the height of insolence that there are Hindus even amongst the ruling class who decry their work and are keen to force them out of India. Unless the Hindus do all they can to treat the Untouchables as Hindus, they have no right to deprive them of all the aids, educational and medical and religious, that they do get from missionaries. It would be the height of tyranny to keep them down and prevent others from giving them a helping hand. God will help Harijans, if they have the will to help themselves.

Gandhiji was perfectly justified in not fighting on two fronts during the struggle for Independence. But the whole-hearted support that he gave to the caste system only meant that he was prepared to do what the ancient Aryans had refused to do : give the Untouchables a place in the fourth caste of Sudras. Ambedkar knew too well what cruel measures Manu, the great Hindu law-giver, had ordained against the Sudras that dared to encroach on the privileges of the higher castes. No wonder if the Untouchables openly burned

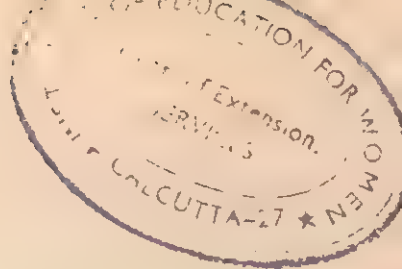
a copy of Manu's Laws. At best it was an impotent act born of frenzy. But it had a great symbolic significance as breaking away from the past. The Sudras themselves under the influence of English education have revolted in South India and to a lesser extent in Maharashtra against Brahmins. The non-Brahmin movement has had great success as a political movement. They have successfully ousted the Brahmins from the seats of power and high offices. The question may well be asked whether Dr. Ambedkar could not have joined hands with the Sudras in asserting their rights. But Dr. Ambedkar knew that the non-Brahmin movement was only a political movement in the interests of the non-Brahmin higher castes so the Sudras the untouchables are as untouchable as to a Brahmins may have been ousted from the political field in South India and in Maharashtra, But Brahmin purohits are still in demand for the religious salvation of Vaishyas and Sudras So it is inevitable that the Untouchables will have to fight their battle by standing on their legs with whatever little assistance that the Government may give within the limits of their own political safety.

Time and righteousness and numbers are on their side. They will have to fight for their right, let us hope non-violently, but let them not forget that they are Indians too and their elevation is needed not merely in their own interests but even more in the interests of, and for the good name, of India.

6 Social Dynamics in Gandhian Philosophy

O. P. Verma





6 Social Dynamics in Gandhian Philosophy

O. P. Verma

Mahatma Gandhi, a practical man and a dynamic personality who left a legacy capable of re-establishing the jerking society and re-ensuring surviving existence to mankind now standing on the volcanic vertex to be devoured anytime to the extent of total extinction, not only indicated the goals of universal advancement but also prescribed and directed the definite, sure and steady course for their attainment. He made his life a volume of experimentations for the sake of remoulding social structure and reshaping social values to lead human society to unrivalled individual freedom and perfection and unshakable social solidarity and equilibrium. Gandhi envisaged a social organisation quite in spontaneous cohesion with individuals striving for personal perfection and contentment, not on the basis of competing or conflicting with their fellowmen, but through a natural process of 'give and take' involving mutual co-operation, love and sympathy. No aspect of human life has been left untouched by this great man whose social philosophy over runs all barriers of distance and epochs.

The social theory of Mahatma Gandhi includes his valuable conceptions regarding social dynamics - the nature, the method and the direction of social change. "Change", according to Gandhi, "is a condition of progress." The secret of individual progress lies in the development of society as a whole. Gandhi dreamt of a society where decentralized authority is vested in the hands of

small-scale institutions channelizing social energy towards common good, where science and technology assist in eliminating want, scarcity and unemployment and in enhancing co-operative living and self-sufficiency, where coercive control is substituted by self restraint and where love, truth, non-violence and such other moral values reign supreme and are internalized so deep in individual consciousness that physical achievements and spiritual realization are coordinated and synthesized in unique coherence of the cosmic order and the social order.

Gandhi calls himself a revolutionary and if the essence of revolution may be conceived in terms of original and practical endeavour to bring about change in personal and social life through ever refined experiments, Gandhi's life is evidently a revolutionary experimentation. But he is opposed to revolution which necessitates bloodshed and destruction. He wishes to remodel society without the least use of force. During the process of change, he is not ready to overlook the least harm done even to the lowest. This remodeling must be peaceful and harmonious. Violence and terror find no place in his methodology of social dynamics. Revolution for Gandhi is not the usurpation of power with an objective to change social system. It is, on the contrary, a change in social relationships resulting in sweet and cordial transfer or distribution of power.

Gandhian principle of social dynamics has rightly been termed as 'Scientific non-violentism'. As against 'dialectics' his 'scientific non-violentism' is founded on mutual co-operation and intrinsic love. It believes in the change of heart of the expropriator in order to make him conscious of his responsibilities to his fellow-men and thereby become indifferent towards his authority for the systematic replacement of the current norms and ideals by new values and ethos. It is a constructive dynamic method, a process which recognizes non-violence as per requisite of revolution. Gandhi views life as a synthetic whole whose social, economic, political and moral aspects are delicately interwoven with each other. Changing one

and ignoring the others would bear no fruit. Similarly the individual and the society are inseparably committed to react upon one another. Gandhi's notion of revolution, therefore, stresses upon the gradual alteration and rearrangement of personal and social conditions upon a change without conflict, a change with strict adherence to moral expectations, a change non-violent and in a sense automatic.

Force is a key to revolution. And Gandhi never denies that, Conflict is an inevitable concomitant of revolutionary process. And that too is unhesitatingly admitted by Gandhi. The statement may seem to be a bit queer at the outset, but its validity becomes explicit if Gandhian conception of force and conflict is expounded. He believed in the use of moral force for bringing about revolutionary changes in social systems. It is the struggle between the good and the evil, between the virtue and the vice, between the sacred and the sin, that accelerates the process of social evolution. The history of social dynamics is the story of the conflict between truth and untruth, between violence and non-violence, between selfishness and altruism. For Gandhi, the internal conflict is accountable in social change which he treats as a psychological phenomenon. Every individual personality is comprised of a duality of antagonistic traits, of two incompatible forces ever trying to dominate each other. The one aspect of individual self is full of ambitions of ease, facility, accumulation and sensual gratification. But the other aspect craves for love, for sympathy and for peace, aspires for higher values of truth, goodness and beauty (Satyam, Shivam, Sunderam). The progress of human life is directed and determined on the basis of the struggle between these two conflicting forces-the one uplifting towards the pleasure of the soul, and the other drowning into the physical and material pleasures. Love collides with hatred, violence with nonviolence and selfishness with altruism.

The methodology that Gandhi advocates in his philosophy of social dynamics is yet another novelty. He insists upon the congruity of means and ends in the process of social change. The ends are predetermined facts. Attainment of good goals requires

the selection and utilization of good means. Evil methods can not bring worthy results as planting noxious weeds can not yield roses. That is why he pleads for the use of non-violence, truth and such other moral weapons to fight the tyrannies of existing social systems. He emphatically declares that he was sure that 'out of the orgy of violence the people will learn the lessons in non-violence.' such non-violentistic approach may be (as it has been by many) looked upon as utopian, but his impregnable belief in this doctrine and his tremendous self-confidence in the ultimate victory of his assertion have apparently provided sparks of hope and life to the humanity tumbling under drooping darkness and looming frustration.

Gandhi does not reduce individuals to mechanistic framework as far as their transformation is concerned. Mere change in habits is not reformation or, to be more clear, revolution is not confined to the alterations in overt behaviour of the people, for, without reshaping the internal self i. e. the outlook, the aspirations and the goals, it would mean nothing more than apparition, the result of terror. The foundations of the nature and method of Gandhian revolution may be discerned in the reorientation of human mind, in the change of human heart. Revolution, according to Gandhi, is not a sudden change over from one form of social system to the other. It is rather a gradual modification in which the cross-cutting processes of construction and destruction, of germination and elimination, of acceptance and negation are simultaneously set in action. There is gradual and natural replacement of old norms and traditions by new ideals and procedures. Inference and reasoning do not define progress in Gandhian theory of social dynamics. Progress can be assessed only when individuals feel that they are actually progressing and that the society is progressing. He clearly indicates that 'you must not merely satisfy reason, you must move the heart also.'

And, that is the great question. How to change the heart? Coercion cracks it, temptations trap. The only way which Gandhi suggests in this regard is to stimulate the strength of the conscience,

to awaken the force of soul, to gear up the altruistic aspect of the internal self. The reality of revolution is to inculcate in the physically powerful, an internal urge to surrender, to voluntarily hand over what he can otherwise retain easily. This is non-violent revolution which is possible through 'Satyagrah' based on moral force and strength of soul. Satyagraha, as a technique of revolution is quite contrary to Marxian way of violent revolution which involves physical torture and bloodshed. Satyagraha is to fight for the truth, to rectify the wrong-doer without harming him but, in stead, compelling him to yield before the Satyagrahi's self-torture and power of endurance. Satyagraha, as a means to social change, is a unique contribution in the field of social dynamics. It is a love fight, where the problem of 'do or die' is involved. It is a '**dharmayudha**' (the religious war) which necessitates divine assistance. Satyagraha " is a science in making," the science with basic assumptions of truth, non-violence and self-sacrifice, the science which corroborates with religion which is made up of laws that bind men all over the world,' the science having faith in God epitomised in Truth and law, in ethics and morality, in fearlessness, in conscience, even in the atheism of the atheist.

It would not be out of place to mention here that, because of political interests, the conception of non-violence has been misinterpreted and even misused occasionally. Gandhi's non-violence is not cowardice which is the quality of the weak. Gandhi confessed in his later years that the principle of hitherto followed non-violence has been the non-violence of the weak and hence has no value in the present state of affairs. He goes on to the extent of declaring that if foreign Muslims including those of Pakistan invade India, the Indian Muslims have to be faithful to this country, and if they fail to do so, they should be shot down as it is permitted by law. He pronounces that he would prefer violence in face of cowardice.

Gandhi wants to establish an extremely idealistic social order which he calls 'Sarvodaya wherein there is provision for the progress of each and every one without distinction. His methodology is

quite in accordance with his aspirations in respect of social dynamics. He is not a determinist. He himself practises his precepts. He does not believe in immediate results. It was heart straining to see this great father of the nation, this great builder of so many great leaders, slip into an ignored corner of country's politics during his last days. He realized that the infancy of Independent India was moving in a wrong direction and that the very spirit of his long-cherished ideals was facing a shattering blows in the hands of his own disciples. He felt it but found himself helpless.

It has been an unfortunate coincidence that Gandhi's leadership emerged in a politically dominated atmosphere and as such he has been as much criticised as he has been praised. But to understand Gandhi in political reference only, is just to start the film and break the screen. The personatity of Gandhi is really unfurled when one enters into the wide gallery of his social philosophy, fully packed up and decorated with picturesque and guiding principles regarding the nature, the aim, the method, and the course of change in various aspects of social life. It may be doubted that as a political innovator he is followed for long, but it may well be realized and assured that as a social reformer and and a philosopher of social dynamics Gandhi would haunt for ages the minds of myriads of not only Indian people but of the entire globe.

7 Moral Philosophy of Gandhi

Ramnath Sharma

7 Moral Philosophy of Gandhi

Ramnath Sharma

On the occasion of the Second Round table Conference, when Gandhi went to Europe and was staying with Pierre Ceresole, the originator of the International voluntary service for peace in Switzerland he was asked by Pierre, "Tell us what qualities you think a leader for this age would need". Gandhi replied, "Realisation of God every minute of the twenty four hours".¹

Ultimate end God realisation

The ultimate moral end, according to Gandhi, is God realisation. His assumptions with regard to God are based upon the philosophy of the Upanisads and Gita. God is bliss, God is truth, light, love and fearlessness. He, too, obeys his own laws. God is not an individual. He is the soul of the beings and the universe. Man is free only to choose his actions, their results are independent of him. Gandhi's thoughts about the freedom of man are grounded in the Gita. Soul, though not God, is inseparable from it.

Unity of life

Gandhi was a staunch supporter of world brotherhood as a consequence of his belief in one God present in all living beings.

1. Muriel Iester—'Gandhi, world citizen', (1945), P. 47

Going a step further, by believing in the existence of God in every living being, Gandhi's theory of non-violence has become extremely comprehensive. His theories of public service and non-violence are based in his religious philosophy. In his words, "My duty is service of God and therefore service of of humanity."

Swadeshi and Swarajya

The same thoughts formed the rudiments of Gandhi's campaigns of swadeshi and swarajya. God-realisation is the ultimate end of life. God can be comprehended in every object. Thus, the attainment of God means self realisation or swarajya. In a social context this means economic, political and social self-dependence. It was on this basis of social philosophy that Gandhi initiated the swadeshi campaign. "Swadeshi is that spirit within us which restricts us to use the service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote."² The use of swadeshi introduces self-dependence in the individual and society and also generates love for one's country. Although Gandhi was an internationalist, he was, at the same time, a patriot to his county. He had said, "I want culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible.....But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any one of them."³

Sarvodaya

Public service is a means to attainment of God, because God is infused in every one. In the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi swadeshi, swarajya and sarvodaya are steps in the attainment of God. Swarajya comes from swadeshi and sarvodaya from swarajya. The ideal of sarvodaya is the ideal of Ramarajya. Sarvodaya means the all round development of every individual. Its aim is the establishment of a society in which every individual, religion, language and literature is to get an unhindered opportunity.

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2. Quoted by C.F. Andrews in "Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas" P. 140
 3. Quoted by Romain Rolland in "Mahatma Gandhi," Indian Edition, P. 117.

Synthesis of ethics and religion

In this way, Gandhi has synthesized religion and ethics, as he opines that ethics does not preclude religion. A seed in the form of ethics does not give out a sapling until it is watered by water in the form of religion. "As soon as we leave the moral basis we cease to be religious."⁴

Importance and nature of morality

Ethics directs one to discuss truth and falsity and to act without attachment in order to achieve good. It is the science of ideals. It formulates laws both for the society and the individual. It is universal. "Another feature of the moral law is that it is eternal and immutable."⁵ "The highest morality is universal."⁶ In Gandhiji's opinion, how is justice to be done in every situation and how this policy is to be pursued - only the government or state which learns this science can be happy, everything else being ineffectual effort. "No individual and no nation can ever violate the moral law with impunity."⁷

Synthesis of Ethics and Politics

And in this way, Mahatma Gandhi synthesized ethics and politics too. Both politics and economics should be grounded in morality. The principle of might is right belongs to antiquity and has not protruded into the present. Non-violence and benevolence are the principal moral laws. "The highest moral law is, as we have seen, that we should unremittingly work for the good of mankind."⁸

4. "Young India." Nov. 24, 1921 P. 365.

5. Gandhi, "Ethical Religion," Trans. by A. R. Ayar, S. Ganesan Publisher, Madras (1922) P. 46

6. Ibid, P. 59

7. Ibid, P. 48

8. Ibid, P. 39

Signs of moral laws

The following are the signs of moral laws, according to Gandhi - (1) Moral laws are static. (2) Moral laws are not relative to individual or circumstance and are universally comprehensible. (3) Moral laws are divine. (4) The result, too, of moral laws is ultimately good. (5) The history of moral laws means the history of the evolutionary deliberation of everlasting, comprehensive and immutable moral laws. As civilization progresses so does the understanding of these laws. (6) The conscience is a divine spark. It is thus, also the preceptor of moral laws.

Judgment of good and bad

Mechanical or intuitive activities are not the object of moral judgment; Like rationalist and purposivist ethicists Gandhi too regards only voluntary actions as the objects of moral judgment. "No action which is not voluntary can be called moral."⁹ There also include activities originating in habit. According to Gandhiji, while contemplating upon morality it is to be attended to that the work is good and done with a good intention. Its result is not in our control, the only one who rewards is God.

Relation between means and ends

At this point the question of means and ends, as a relation, crops up. Generally, Gandhi believes that the means does not become good merely upon the pretence that the end is good. "The end cannot justify the means."¹⁰ But Gandhi has also conceded exceptions to this rule. For example it was Gandhi himself who originated and implemented the campaign against the notorious salt law. The exception has two aspects, the first where both the means and the end are related to the same individual and the second comes into action when all the superior means have failed. Under such

9. Ibid, P. 40

10. Ibid, P. 42

circumstances the use of even bad means may be right. But it is essential that the aim be good under every circumstance.

Means - Non-violence and Satyagraha

According to Gandhi, the most superior means are non-violence and satyagraha. Gandhi treated truth as the equivalent of God. According to him, "There should be truth in thought, Truth in speech and Truth in action."¹¹ As an end, satyagraha is the ultimate objective of both individual and society. A person practising it or contemplating its implementation should practice non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy and non-covetousness. Satyagraha is both a means as well as an end. As a means it implies sticking to the truth while endeavouring the procuring of the end through such non-violent methods as non-cooperation and fasting. It was in the political field that Gandhi made successful use of this means.

Non-violence

Non-violence is the fundamental tenet of Gandhian ethics. Gandhi used to remark, "Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of brutes"¹² Of the above five laws prescribed for the person doing satyagraha, non-violence is the most dominant. Truth and non-violence are as intimately related as hand and glove. As Gandhi has put it, realisation of truth is impossible without non-violence. Celibacy, non-stealing and non-covetousness also imply non-violence. They prove non-violence. Non-violence is the life of truth. "One had better not speak it (truth) if one cannot do so in a gentle way."¹³ In his opinion, "Non-violence should be treated as the means and truth the end." Gandhi has taken non-violence in an extremely comprehensive sense. One should not injure another by any of the three—mind, word and action.

11. 'Yeravada Mandir'. P. 2

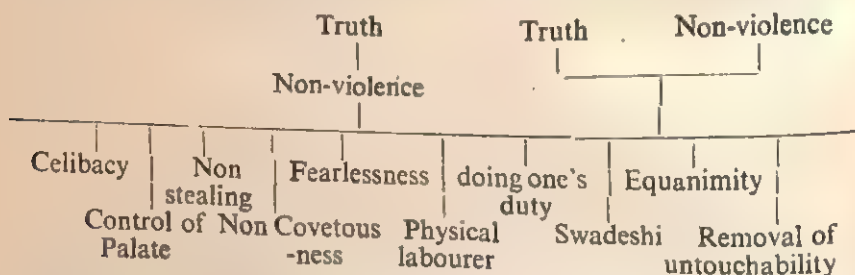
12. 'Young India'. Aug. 11. (1920)

13. 'Young India'. Vol. 11,

Mere bad thought is violence. Precipitation is violence. False statement too is violence. Jealousy is violence. To desire ill luck of another is violence. Even possession of an object indispensable to the world is violence.

Conditions of non-violence

In this way, non-violence is the supreme duty. Besides its negative aspect it possesses a positive aspect. Non-violence has love, sympathy, pity and fearlessness. The following chart represents Gandhi's concept of this comprehensive form of non-violence. Both society and the individual should take an oath to non-violence.



For one who undertakes to see non-violence through Gandhi, has prescribed 11 vows or duties. In Gandhi perusal of non-violence fasting, prayer and penitence are also assimilated. Prayer brings power of energy. Fasting purifies the soul and the body. Penitence is aimed at a change of heart.

All these vows or duties have been accepted by Gandhi with avid strictness. The following description of the major duties will make this clear—

Description of obligations

1. **Celibacy**—It means the negation of the sensuality. "Brahmacharya means control of all the organs of sense."¹⁴ According to

14. 'Yeravada Mandir', P. 10.

Gandhi a person, who faithful to his wife, goes through sexual intercourse merely for attaining parenthood is a celibate.

2. Control of Palate—Similarly “Control of palate is very closely connected with the observance of brahmacharya.”¹⁵

3. Non-stealing—This too covers a lot of ground. Beside forceful acquisition of another's wealth even greed, selfishness, not giving alms, persisting with an unused object and unaccountable accumulation of wealth are also sins. Gandhi wrote that, “I suggest that we are thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use and keep it, I thief it from somebody else.”¹⁶

3. Non covetousness—Thus non-covetousness in thought and action is necessary. In Gandhi's opinion a wealthy man is a trustee and not the owner of his wealth. He should spend it only in favour of humanity, society or country.

4. Fearlessness—Fearlessness is the sign of a valiant. Fear is the result of doubt. A follower of non violence should fear nothing but evil. “Non violence is not a cover for cowardice, but it is the supreme virtue of the brave.”¹⁷

5. Elimination of untouchability—Untouchability is a blot on society. It is the duty of everyone to eliminate it. Everyone should do one's own work. Gandhi advised everyone to do the work even of a scavenger.

6. Tolerance and Equanimity—According to Gandhi the feeling towards foreign religions should be one of equanimity and of respect

15. Ibid. P. 15.

16. Vide, ‘Speeches and Writings of M.K. Gandhi,’ Madras (1934). P. 284.

17. ‘Young India’ Aug. 12. 1926

or friendliness. Behind Gandhi's famous daily prayer was this feeling of equanimity.

7. **Swadeshi** - Swadeshi is the predominant part of non-violence but it does not mean the hatred of the foreigner. According to Gandhi, an object which cannot be produced in the country or at most with great pains, if it be produced merely due to hatred of the foreigner then this does not have any element of swadeshi duty. This view throws adequate light upon Gandhi's benevolent patriotism.

Non-Violence in Economic, Political and Social Fields

Gandhi stressed that economics and politics should also be founded upon ethics. He himself experimented with success in these spheres a number of times. Non-violence is the practical law not only in individual life but also in the social, political and economic lives. In *Young India*, Mahatma Gandhi writes, "The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on force of arms but on the force of truth and love."¹⁸

Non Violence in the Economic field

In the economic field, Gandhi emphasised upon cottage industries and non co-operation with exploiting institutions. A life devoid of physical labour was, to him, a sin. Exploitation cannot exist in a society in which non-violence does exist. Gandhi stressed voluntary sacrifice and control. Gandhi, like Marx, believed in labour being the real capital and supported equitable distribution but he opposed class struggle. Hatred generates hatred and violence does the same. The rich are the trustees of public wealth and they should spend it accordingly. Gandhi suggested the adoption of non-violent non-co-operation in order to end capitalism.

18. 'Young India,' Oct. 11. 1928.

Non Violence in the Political field

With regard to the political field, Gandhi declared that it was sin and violence to reduce others to ignominious slavery. Among the means of achieving freedom from foreign oppression, Gandhi made it incumbent upon people to pursue non-violent non-cooperation and respectful disobedience. Gandhi avidly opposed making the state all-powerful. He was a bitter critic of dictatorship. He supports democracy. In a non-violent democracy, every one shall be equally free. Gandhi's ideal is a cooperative non-violent society in which state will not be needed.

Non-Violence in the Social field

Gandhi stressed non-violence in the social sphere too. Gandhi's campaigns for improving the conditions of the untouchables and the widows were based upon his sermon of equality. Here too, the idea at the base is non-violence. Exploitation, be it social, political or economic, is violence. For the elimination of all these Gandhi suggested the method of non-violent non-cooperation.

Critical Evaluation

Lack of originality

Mahatma Gandhi was a religious person whose ethics is grounded in his religious faith. Although not systematic his ethics voices the spirit of the age. But notwithstanding this redeeming feature from the scholarly view point his ethics or moral thoughts are unorganised and unbalanced. Thus he has been subjected to severe criticism. His thoughts lack any originality. According to B. G. Ray, "Gandhiji starts from Hindu religion, and the metaphysical solution of eternal problems from a Hindu angle of vision from the basis of his philosophy. He has not sought to answer or solve the problem from an independent perspective of experience or reason."¹⁹ It is not too incorrect to say that Gandhiji did not

19. 'Gandhian Ethics', P. 3-4.

present any novel moral laws but he cannot be said to be completely without originality. He gave to the old moral laws a completely new form. Gandhiji was the first one to introduce non-violence into the political field and he also made successful use of it. He declared punishment immoral. Gandhiji was the precursor of non-violent revolution.

Extremism

According to Miller, "Gandhiji belongs to the type of sanyasis who repress the flesh consciously, reject all the colour and warmth of life, denounce everything which is not necessary for mere livelihood, hasten the dissolution of the body, so that the spirit imprisoned in it may the more quickly be united with the divine."²⁰ Gandhiji is called an extremist, an allegation of undeniable veracity, but it should not be forgotten that he made the utmost effort to make his vows practicable and proved their practicability by following them himself. Excessive emphasis upon repression of senses has led to his ethics becoming permeated with stringency. Probably his assumption regarding celibacy may strike one as untalented and even harmful to happy matrimonial life but a balancing stress upon qualities like non violence, love, equanimity etc., have prevented his sermons from becoming utterly heartless. Actually, Gandhiji himself was an experimenter and did not recognise any means as the final. He had hoped that there would be new experiments in the application of non-violence and looked at attentively this hope does not impress one as a false hope.

Doubts about non-violence

Many critics express grave doubts regarding the probabilities of experimentation in non - violence but in order to comprehend Gandhiji's thought it will be essential to set aside the general pragmatic idea and approach the nub of the problem whence the

20. Rene Fullop Miller, 'Gandhi, the Holy Man'. P. 157.

utility of non - violence, for purposes of all kinds of healthy and permanent improvements, will become transparent. There can, of course, be some practical doubts about the possibility of trusteeship. Progress is imminent in the attempts of making practical Vinobhaji's campaign of Gandhism. Only the future can tell the extent of its practicability. Gandhiji endeavoured to discover the fundamental solution of all problems. Another major reason why his solution of existing problems and his sketches of man's future seem impractical is that human society has not achieved that level and man also lacks the necessary moral strength to successfully use those means. But the only conclusion which can be drawn from this is that society will have to acquire moral strength to proceed upon his path. Non-violence is a means in moral behaviour. The means contradicting it are violence and use of brutal strength. In order to conclude which of these two means is superior and to the extent to and reason for which it is so, it is necessary to precede it by analysing right and wrong. From the ethical view point, right is that which is good and conversely, bad is wrong. Now, the result of any moral action can consist of two aspects—individual and social, upon the object. If any activity favours the perpetrator but harms the object, or if the result of an action benefits the individual and harms society, or it is favourable immediately but detrimental in the long run, then the activity cannot be said to be good because in order to be so, the result of an activity must be good for the individual and society, at present and in future. Here, this question arises only when the reason and the result differ. In the preceding example the result implies the reason.

Judging violence from this criterion, we realise that it can benefit either the individual or the society, never for the two together - a wealthy person exploits the poor and lives in luxury but he causes misery to innumerable more who subsist in misery and poverty. In an heirarchical society, there is of course general progress but in the absence of a state of independent thought the person's personality remains dwarfed. Besides only the more immediate results of violence can be good. Over a long period it

benefits neither the individual nor society. The tendencies of a violent person becomes degenerate and his character devolves. People fear him but also hate him unostentatiously. Then he is always conscious of misgivings about his opponent's seeking after revenge. Violence gives rise only to further violence.

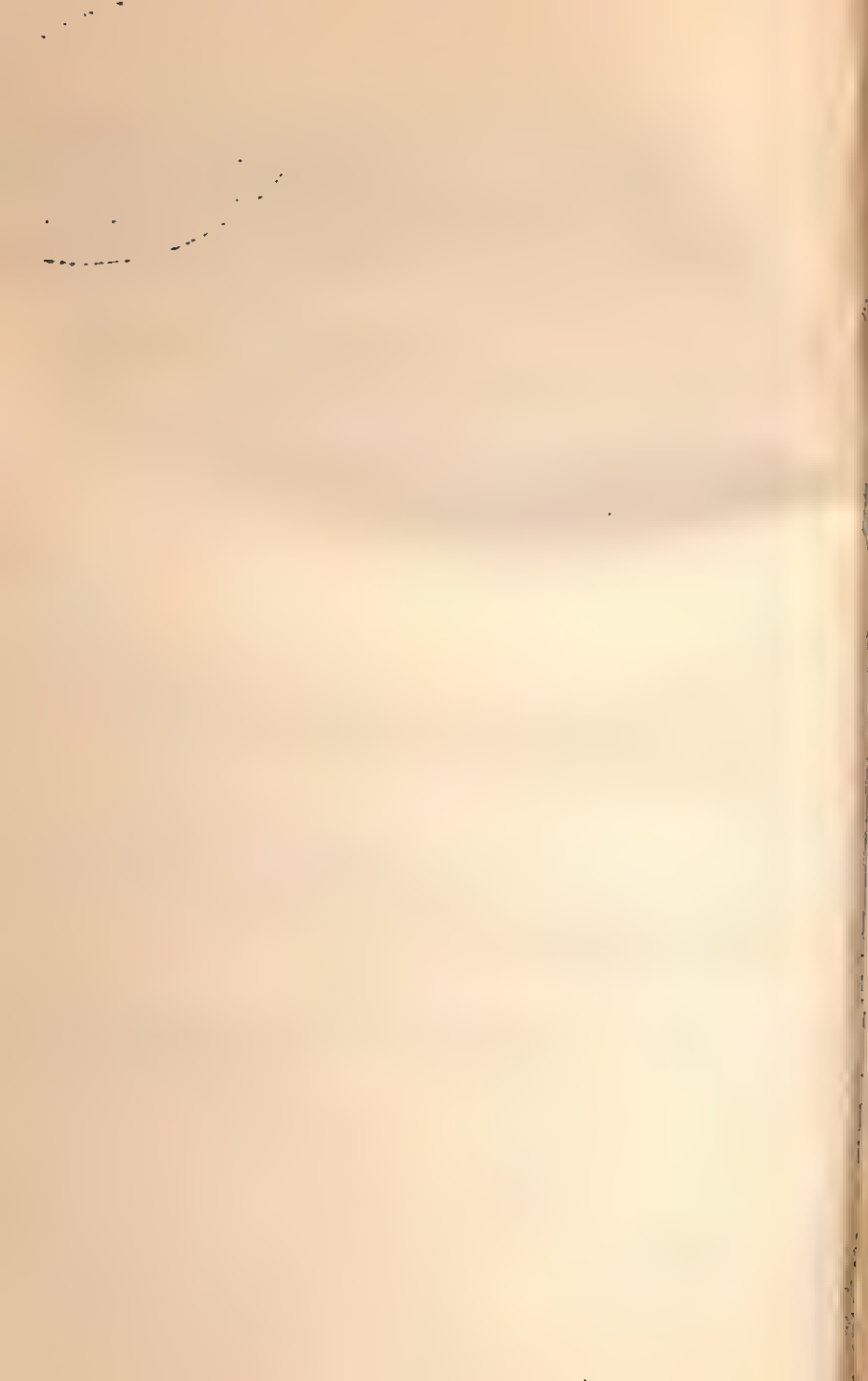
On the contrary, non violence results in just the converse way. It may lead to some delay in the maturation of the result but the results are permanent as well as good. It is possible, too, that the one who pursues non violence may even have to sacrifice his life and bear pain without being rewarded. But even this suffering produces a result calculated to aggrandise the spiritual pleasure of both himself and his opponent. The patience of man is dependent upon his character. A non-violent person is conscious of intrinsic happiness although he may be undergoing extrinsic pain infliction. Even though the opponent does ostensibly resist any such overtures, he internally becomes addicted to this and finally submit himself.

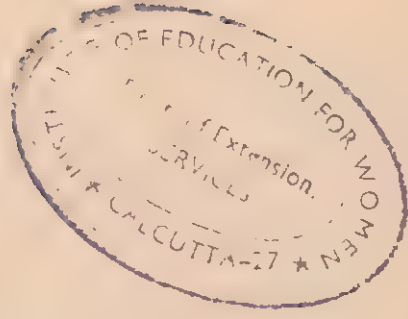
The next question to be considered is whether the use of force is admissible under any circumstance or not? The answer is that in some exceptions it is both necessary and possible. Violence or resorting to force is objected to only when it is used either indiscriminately or for the interests of this or that class or individual. If a particular individual class refuses to abandon, by any means, his incorrect and deplorable path and does immense harm to others then use of force also becomes necessary. At this stage it can be objected that how is it possible to make use of one person or class as a means to the benefit of another class or individual? Its solution is that the person conducting himself in an objectionable manner does the greatest extent of damage to himself. Gita goes to the extent of saying that although apparently alive, he is in reality dead. In this way, if it becomes irrefutably clear that use of force is in the interests of the offending person or class and all others concerned and also that peaceful means are not going to yield any desirable result then the use of force is both unavoidable and moral Yudhisthira's laying and Sri Krishna's urging Arjuna to war claim

the sanction of identical argument. Pandavas had made unsuccessful and fruitless use of all peaceful means. The misconduct on the part of the Kaurvas had assumed such proportions as to have caused the degeneration of society. Both in the interests of society and the fulfilment of duty it had become indispensable for Arjuna to fight it being absolutely non-violent to have engaged in war, both from the mental and spiritual viewpoints, as it was qualified by lack of yearning and done with the intention of offering to God. Thus it was also moral.

In the present age, Gandhiji too has licenced resort to use of force in exceptional cases. But it is a necessary condition that all other means should have proved ineffective and use of force should be in positive interests of both, the one using it and the one upon whom it is used. Even Gandhiji himself behaved in a similar way some times. The infringement of the salt law was both an evidence of use of force and unconstitutional but it was violating the law of India in the interests of India. There was no other alternative at hand. At the same time it also caused moral improvement of the English people because having reduced India to dependence they were acting in an extremely immoral way. It is also worth noting that this action was purely for the sake of duty and done without attachment. In the war against the English Gandhiji invariably advocated love and not hatred for them. He declared himself the best friend of the Britons.

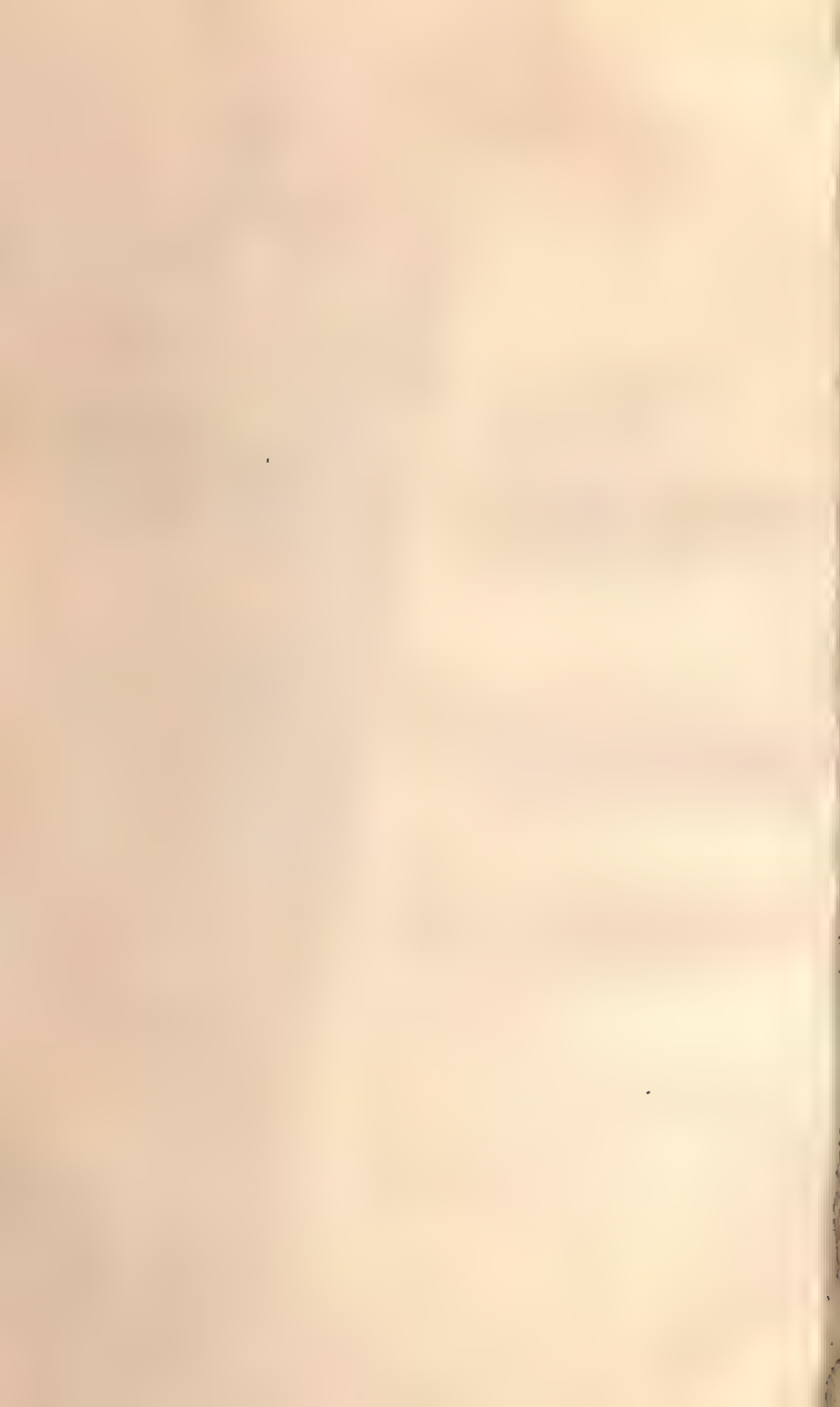
In this way, the morality or immorality of resorting to force can be judged only with reference to the entire situation and in some castes it becomes inevitable.





8 Gandhi's Approach to Socialism

Ram Chandra Gupta



8 Gandhi's Approach to Socialism

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It is difficult to say anything with certainty about socialism. It has been differently interpreted by different people and very rarely two definitions are alike. In fact, socialism has lost its real shape because everybody tries to interpret it according to his own special viewpoint. This is obviously due to the fact that socialism has come to mean something more than a more political system. However, there is something common to all the interpretations as regards the aims of socialism. To all, socialism aims at providing first of all the conditions under which liberty can exist. This is as much as to say that the creation of equality is its aim, because it holds that liberty is not worth having without the security which equality provides. From the economic point of view every socialist argues that industry will be more efficient when it is socialized, and from the moral point of view he claims that socialism will ensure justice. Socialism thus proposes to complete rather than to oppose the liberal - democratic creed. It will use the victories already won in a parliamentary democracy to extend democratic principles to industry. In the name of liberty the machinery of government has been altered; will it not be possible to alter the economic organisation of society in the name of equality ?

Mahatma Gandhi, himself born in the Baniya community, a community which is commonly deemed an economically dominant

community in India, became conscious, at an early stage of his life, of the acquisitive nature of this community. He held the **Baniya** community mostly responsible for the poverty of the Indian masses and, as such, he showed his hostile reaction to capitalism in general. Also, he studied the different theories of European socialism and communism and felt the sickness of an acquisitive society fully. As a result, he accepted socialism as a part of his programme with a view to ending social and economic inequality in India. But as it was his habit to interpret every theory and every programme in the Indian context as well as to judge its validity on moral grounds, he did not accept the Western socialism wholeheartedly, but gave a new interpretation to it and tried to fit it in the Indian circumstances and conditions. Anyway, he accepted socialism as an essential part of his economic programme.

His faith in socialism was so ardent that some interpreters are prepared to feel that Gandhian socialism is Marxism minus violence. It means that Gandhiji agreed with Marx so far as the ends were concerned; he differed only in the approach and methods of Marx. Indeed, Gandhian socialism is different in approach, philosophy and outlook from the entire thesis of Marxian philosophy. Marxism is based on the edifice of the economic interpretation of life; beyond the material needs there is little to be worried in life. But in Gandhism, life is positively placed on a higher pedestal than the mere economic one. Humanism and the importance of inner life make Gandhism fundamentally different from Marxism. The inclusion of the concept of soul, and its redemption, ought to make Gandhism substantially a theory of the Utopia, which appears difficult, if not impossible, to be practised. Gandhiji's emphasis on the role of the inner man, and the importance which he attached to the spiritual aspect, make Gandhism a matter of blissful contemplation. This interpretation of socialism in terms of spiritual beatitude make it non-scientific and dogmatic to the Western mind. This also leads to a possible assertion that Gandhism is opposed to socialism of any sort, for socialism is basically scientific, rational and mostly objective. There is nothing in Western socialism and Marxism where any trace of the Gandhian approach to life may be found.

Notwithstanding, Gandhiji fervently believed that he was a socialist in a true sense. In answering the question "What is socialism?" he said, "Socialism is a beautiful word and, so far as I am aware, in socialism the members of the society are all equal - none high, none low. This is socialism. In it, the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level. " He described this kind of socialism as pure as crystal, and suggested the need for adopting crystal-like methods for its achievement. The Gandhian end was to be achieved by Gandhian means. Unlike the Western socialists, he did not differentiate between the ends and the means. He was convinced that only truthful, non-violent and pure-hearted socialists would be able to establish a socialist society in India and the world. And he was perfectly right in his thinking. Why socialism alone, no political system in the world which aims at the establishment of a just social and economic order in society, can be successfully evolved unless the people are truthful and honest in their thinking and behaviour. A mere tinkering with the social and political institutions will not bring about a new heaven and a new earth unless people's character their daily habits and attitudes are equal to it. The socialist state is a wonderful ideal provided the nation has the character and leadership to work it in practice.

The Gandhian theory of socialism, truly speaking, was not meant for any particular country or state. Gandhiji was world-minded and he thought that with the principles of truth and non-violence the whole world could be reorganized for world socialism. Brilliantly enough, he planned a world order and that too with no hatred towards any particular group. While for Western socialist thinkers, like Marx and Sismondi, there is a class conflict, protest against some group or other and some friction in the social order, for Gandhi all these frictions and conflicts do not exist- He wanted to construct a new, non-violent social system, in tune with India's ancient cultural traditions, according to which the spirit counted more than the material forces. In place of class conflict and social friction, he preached the gospel of renunciation, voluntary poverty,

dignity of labour, equality of men and women and universal friendship. He did not think that the cause of socialism would be furthered by class conflict, creating group consciousness and hatred, and propagating the cult of tension between individual or groups of individuals. Thus Gandhian socialism is of a different pattern and of a different colour from all other forms of socialism.

Gandhian socialism is mainly based on his ethical concepts. He confronted all traditional socialists with the most complex question of God. His supreme reliance on the unrealisable, at least unseen, power made all socialistic thinking a matter of faith. He posed a question whether the socialists can believe in God or not and whether those who believed in God could be socialists or not. He found out from his practical knowledge that most of the socialist thinkers had founded their systems on the negation of God. In fact, the greatest of all socialists, like Marx and Lenin, denied the existence of any concept of God and went much further saying that the idea of God had been the main source of social exploitation and inequality. These socialists believed that socialism would be lost in prejudices, dogmas and superstitions if it is associated with any thing which is not strictly material or practical. However, Gandhiji did not believe that all the socialists were atheists or had anti-God feeling. There might be many who did not connect God with social problems; possibly they felt no need to assemble these two different concepts. They separated God and ethical life from political problems and institutions, possibly because they thought that the association of the idea of God and the ethical life with socialism would make the latter a dogmatic creed. But this assumption is baseless. In Gandhian thinking the concept of God never meant the too dogmatic and extremely doubtful existence of the Unknown and Unrealisable. Gandhiji had correlated God with Truth and Truth, according to him, meant something different from the usual meaning normally attached to it in the common language. From this he expounded the concept of Satyagraha. And he laid down the path of Satyagraha as the only means for attaining any higher ideal of socialism or democracy. By laying so much emphasis on

Satyagraha as a method of attaining socialism, Gandhiji made it clear that the violent methods which were usually advocated by the earlier socialists would be impossible and undesirable in a search for true socialism. It is of the utmost importance to note that Gandhian socialism is based on concepts and forces which were completely new to the whole domain of Western socialism in particular, and Western thinking in general. "Satyagraha", said Gandhiji, "is a force which, if it became universal, would revolutionize social ideals and do away with despotisms and the ever-growing militarism under which the nations of the West are groaning, and almost being crushed to death, and which fairly promises to overwhelm even the nations of the East."

From the above exposition of Gandhian socialism it must not be thought that it was only a matter of the mind. Gandhiji was intensely practical and his principle was that the life of an individual must find all possible expression only in the context of society. He added to this the possibility of the application of non-violence and truth in all activities and thought. Gandhian ideology in general, and Gandhian socialism in particular, is no mere theory, no mere intellectual grasp or philosophic satisfaction which can be attained by simple speculation and thinking. The most peculiar and significant aspect of Gandhian socialism is the emphasis Gandhiji laid on the internal aspect of life. Even in the case of the theory of Sarvodaya and Sarvodaya Samaj, Gandhiji did not attach much importance to external forces in organising the institutions. He did not believe that revolution or evolution when imposed from outside will bring about any fundamental change in the nature of individual or society. The whole responsibility for reconstruction, in social, economic and political life, must start with the individual himself, and without the individual's consistent and constant attempt at reorientation no amount of community or state effort will bring about the socialist order.

The Gandhian idea of Sarvodaya is an apex of Gandhian socialism. And the idea of Sarvodaya or universal uplift is based

upon an optimistic interpretation of human nature. The man is essentially altruistic and, consequently, social reform must concentrate on bringing to the surface this altruistic element, is the basis of the Gandhian theory of trusteeship. An appeal to the hearts of the people to respect their obligations towards the weaker and less fortunate is the most effective way of bringing about a change in society. And Sarvodaya believes that voluntary sacrifice of one's riches or pleasures will certainly be forthcoming if only the moral approach is strictly followed. Acharya Vinoba Bhave's suggestive phraseology like Bhoodan, Shramdan and Sampattidan reiterates the Gandhian stress on individual volition as the basis for all social reform.

The above reference to the concept of voluntary sacrifice introduces one essential difference between the ethics of Gandhism and socialism. No doubt, among socialists too, there are some who believe in the innate altruism of man. But these are prone to consider the prevailing social circumstances as hindering the free play of such morality and, consequently, agitate for corporate social reform by which mellifluous human nature may play its part. There is, thus, a desire on their part to reform social conditions by the instrumentality of law. But Gandhiji was against any sort of authority trying to coerce man directly or indirectly into realising his social responsibilities. To him organised power was more an evil than a blessing. The power of persuasion is far more fruitful than the power of the state which happens to be the normal channel for the expression of the social will in present-day politics.

Yet the Gandhian suspicion towards organised power should not be interpreted to mean a rejection of all norms of social control. Gandhism does believe in Government regulations and sanctions. But these should not be the concern of specialized institutions, which make Government their profession and monopoly. Government and law must become part and parcel of the life of the common man, things in which he must really have a share. In other words, the overwhelming domination of political power - the feature of

present - day society - must cease and power must sublimate itself into a spirit of voluntary social obligation.

Such a distrust of political power has a streak of extreme individualism in it. His insistence on social revolution through voluntary conversion of the people, his distrust towards the instrumentalities of the state and, finally, his immense faith in human nature, cannot but remind one of the extreme individualist or anarchist notion that the evils of society are, more or less, the consequences of the existence of state. As a matter of fact, Gandhiji's whole emphasis is on the creation of a new type of man with a new vision and outlook. One cannot have socialism or move towards it without a new type of human character. Gandhian socialism, therefore, is mainly an individualistic approach, and it moreover contains particular solutions for the peculiar problems of India and Asia. It may be true that Gandhian socialism with all its ethical complication may be unsuitable in Western hemisphere. But in the East, individualism has not lost its sway. Any socialistic theory must make this distinction between the East and the West. Gandhian socialism may seem confusing in that it implies that there can be anything like individualism in socialism, for socialism by itself means the suppression, if not the negation, of the individual. But in Gandhian socialism the whole approach was from the bottom; Gandhiji was sceptical of the possibility of building up society from the top.

The whole range of Gandhian thinking is superimposed by the influence of the concept of the soul. As in the case of machines, the idea of state and government have also been encircled by the higher ideals of life and soul which will not come into the strict orbit of economic socialism. He felt that decentralisation was the best method and on this ground he said, "God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the West." Concentration of power will not enlighten the individual; on the other hand, it frustrates the inner genius of the individual. Gandhiji believed that every individual had equal responsibility for the society and so the possibility of making everybody as big as everybody

else must be widened. This will be possible in a socialism of decentralised power. In this approach to socialism Gandhian socialism strikes new ground. Socialism has always meant some kind of regimentation and state control over the individual. Though Marx himself had supported, of course very vaguely, some kind of decentralisation of power, other socialists had wanted that power should be centralised as much as possible. In the 20th century, and particularly after the Second World War, this trend for centralisation has been prominent. But in the case of Gandhian socialism, as in the case of Guild Socialists and Fabians, there has been an attempt for making power as much diffused as possible. "Every village," said Gandhiji, "will be a republic or Panchayat having full powers... every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs, even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world. It will be trained and prepared to perish in the attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without... Such a society is necessarily highly cultured, in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants and what is more, knows that no one should want anything, that others cannot have with equal labour".

In emphasising the role of the individual and underestimating the position of the central power, Gandhian socialism is tending to be Utopian. Like the Utopian socialists he was visualising a society where in there would be no army, no police force, no control and no oppression, where men and women would enjoy the same rights and privileges, and where everybody would be left to his own individual judgement. This type of Utopianism is, particularly, out of of date in the present political world. Gandhiji himself admitted, "I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and, therefore, not worth a single thought". Gandhian socialism is unnecessarily overburdened with the hope and greed of the golden age of the past. His repentance for the past made it difficult for him to think for the future to come. In being Utopian he was not wrong, but his Utopia rooted in the past, made him unaware of the new forces of the changed world. He would have certainly become

a progressive socialist, had he suggested a real remedy for the economic problems. His understanding of human nature and human problems was mostly ethical and spiritual. As he stated, "I do not share the socialist belief that centralisation of the necessities of life will conduce to the common welfare when the centralised industries are planned and owned by the State", he was unprepared to accept the basic economic phenomenon of the present economic atmosphere. But history seems to prove that no socialist society will be possible without a strong state. This is due to the fact that contrary to the Gandhian idea that the individual is endowed with all virtues and the individual will never stand against the society, the individual has been the greatest enemy of the group. The state has to come in for the sake of the community or the society. Society cannot thrive without the state. But in Gandhian theory the approach is quite different.

It is a fact that Gandhiji due to his divergent and sometimes self-contradictory ideas, himself made his own theories very difficult to understand. He said, "Communism of the Russian type, that is communism which is imposed on a people, would be repugnant to India. I believe in non-violent communism... my emphasis on non-violence becomes one of principle. Even if I was assured that we could have independence, by means of violence, I should refuse to have it. It won't be real independence. I base my faith in God and His justice." Such were the ideas which made Gandhian socialism a matter of inner faith and internal realization rather than one of practice, proof or experiment. Gandhiji himself was aware that his socialism had been the subject of doubts and criticisms. He said, "I am engaged in solving the same problem that faces scientific socialists. It is true, however, that my approach is always and only through unadulterated non-violence. It may fail... I may be a bad exponent of the doctrine—Trusteeship, as I conceive it, has yet to prove its worthy".

Whatever the doubts of Gandhiji may be in the context of socio-economic attainment, his conviction always found outlet

through Indian beliefs and thoughts. Gandhian socialism is more a serious attempt to revive the ancient Indian culture and less to attain socialism. He had the feeling that "this (European) civilization is irreligious and it has taken such a hold on the people in Europe that those who are in it appear to be half-mad. This awful fact is one of the causes of the daily growing movements". The efforts of Gandhiji were mainly concerned with emancipating men and women on the spiritual level. He could not appreciate the notion that women should seek their own opportunities or that men should try to find out how to be economically comfortable and wealthy. For Gandhiji, wealth in terms of money and property was a matter of responsibility, not a matter of achievement. Such ideas on socialism made the theory of Gandhian socialism less socialistic than probably it was meant to be. Socialism had been a matter of struggle throughout the world and throughout history.

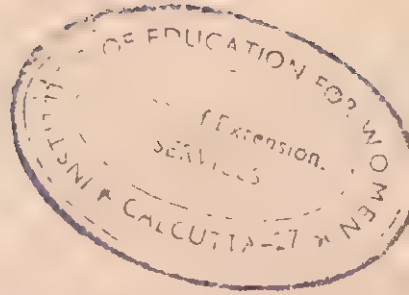
Uniquely in Gandhian approach, there is no strife with the capitalists or struggle with any person or institution to extract more economic benefits. He believed that everything was a gift of God and it was His duty to provide for every one. This assertion, Gandhiji believed, will not degrade the role of man and human society in attaining the socialist society. Gandhiji's references to Indian socialism are found in the **Upanishads**. It finds clear expression in the first verse of the **Upanishad**. Gandhiji felt that socialism was not the fruit of the industrial economy, but it existed long before—thousands of years prior to the Western attempt to conceive anything called socialism. This complex & citation to the earliest references of Indian literature placed Gandhian socialism on a different plane from the rest of world socialism. There was much to be unproved and unchallenged and this privilege allowed Gandhiji to live the life of a communist, though he was opposed to the very thesis of the Marxian followers. He was not in the least against the capitalists as well. "I do not bear any ill-will to the capitalists; I can think of doing them no harm. I want, by means of my suffering, to awaken them to their sense of duty—God help you". Gandhian sociology is full of such saintly statements and appeals.

True indeed, that such statements do not make his theory of socialism scientific, but when understood in the context of the purity of the heart of a crusader and one who had nothing to hope for, except the emancipation of humanity as a whole, Gandhian socialism is undoubtedly one of the greatest and most significant of all intellectual contributions of the 20th century. Few others had so much love for men and possibly no other socialist was prepared to sacrifice one's own stand to benefit the world and the civilization of every man irrespective of caste, creed and colour. Gandhian socialism with all its seeming inconsistencies and lack of scientific treatment deserves the highest attention at least as an appeal from one who was deeply conscious of the human destiny. In the case of the other socialists this aspect of human understanding as a part of socialist thought was visibly lacking.

In fact, the follower of Gandhian socialism does not have to wait for a large-scale revolution, he starts one inside himself and with his own hands. He immediately starts controlling his share of the means of production for the public good. He immediately starts to serve the masses and by his life helps to bring an ideal Bharat nearer into being.

To conclude, the Gandhian outlook, despite the deficiencies of the Gandhian approach to socialism as a scientific theory, itself is a climax, never reached by any other socialist. Combined with the highest rationality and the widest sympathy for all living creatures in general, and human beings in particular, the soul & in the Mahatma was after the search for Truth. In his search for the highest ideals and eternal verities he sacrificed his life, his own comforts, and whatever he had. This personal sacrifice was never possible in any other socialist or any other political thinker. And Thus Gandhian socialism is bound to stand as a solid piece of contribution to human salvation, whereas others have faded or shaken in their ground.





9 Gandhi's Philosophy of Education

T. Paul verghese

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9 Gandhiji's Philosophy of Education

T. Paul Verghese

What is Philosophy :

Peoples everywhere from the beginning have tried to understand life, searched into the reason, purpose and nature of things of their environment, arrived at certain general conceptions and attempted to apply these to their daily conduct of life. When someone attempts to clarify and systematise them by speculation, he enters the road to philosophy. Science is also defined as organised, systematised knowledge. What then is the difference between science and philosophy ? Every science begins as philosophy and ends as art; it arises in hypothesis and flows into achievement. Philosophy speculates, science discovers. Science is analytical description, philosophy is synthetic interpretation into the values. Science deals with laws and facts, philosophy deals with good and bad of a thing. Science without philosophy, facts without perspective and valuation cannot save us from havoc and despair. Philosophy is an idea of what is possible, not a record of accomplished fact. It presents an assignment of something to be proved and tested (by science). Its value lies not in furnishing solutions (which can be achieved only by action) but in difficulties and suggesting methods for dealing with them. Thus philosophy might be described as generalised thinking in relation to its place, function and value in experience.

Philosophy includes evaluation, finding whether one thing is more valuable than the other. A thing is valuable because it is desirable, because it satisfies a want or craving. One sets a very high value upon the hoarding of money, while another sets a very low value upon equitable sharing with others, a third may despise this philosophy. Values change according to changes in environment. It is clear that the most powerful factor or force in one's life is his philosophy, because his line of action is determined by it. The system of values decides a person's fundamental principle of choice.

There is probably no worker whose practice is more affected by his philosophy than the teachers. The teacher's conception of their own work is the crux of the educational situation in any country. Fagin the Jew in *Oliver Twist* was running a school with an avowed aim of turning the youngsters into crooks. His philosophy settled the conduct of that school, its methods and outcome. It makes a difference to his own interests and enthusiasm and in what he selects for emphasis in his instructions. A teacher can spoil a whole generation if he possesses a wrong philosophy of life. The kind of "attitude" carried from the school is of more vital importance than mere information. It becomes the drivewheel of effort, to appreciate the things of most worth, of greatest value. Attitudes control our thinking and acting. What is most desirable in education is to train pupils to acquire an ability to determine which values are of most worth, in other words, the right judgement of values. The power of moulding young minds is a very terrible one. It is capable of deadly misuse as we have already witnessed in the case of German youth. If it falls into the wrong hands, it may produce a world more ruthless and cruel than the haphazard world of nature.

If education is conceived as the process of forming higher values in life or fundamental dispositions and attitudes, towards nature and fellowmen, philosophy may be defined as the general theory of education. Philosophies of education are a part of the wider philosophies of life, because, it pertains as much to the

educational process. Philosophy and education are like the two sides of a coin, one the contemplative and the other active. Education is the active aspect of philosophical belief, the practical means of realising ideals of life. Education in short is the laboratory in which philosophic distinctions become concrete and are tested. Thus it can be seen that all great philosophers from Plato upwards were good educationists and planned their educational theories as applications of their respective philosophies of life. It is after all the educational theories and principles growing out of a particular philosophy that have immediate and significant educational influence. When philosophy fails, education also fails. Philosophy is one's faith or belief. Education is a venture in faith. This kind of faith leads to consecrate or devote their life for the formation of a better community. It is the business of philosophy of education to evaluate human experiences and discover these values most significant in human attainment and progress. Every educational theory implies a philosophy. An important feature of philosophy is selecting and evaluating the basic principles or data in the light of aims and objectives sought. Without objectives we cannot formulate an appropriate scheme of education. Great educators have also been great philosophers, Plato, Rousseau, Spencer, Dewey, Whitehead, Gandhiji, to enumerate a few. Their philosophies are reflected in their lives. The answer to every educational question is ultimately influenced by our philosophy of life. Every system of education must have an aim and the aim of education is relative to the aim of life. Philosophy formulates what it conceives to be the end of life; education offers suggestions how this end is to be achieved. Unless we have some sort of guiding philosophy in deciding the objectives, we get nowhere.

It is through education that the form and structure of the social order are established and maintained. All philosophers believed so. School is an instrument for modifying the character of society. Whether this modification is in direction of a social improvement depends upon the ideas and ideals of those who handle the instrument. Gandhiji devised a scheme of education out of his philosophy

of life — Non-violence in thought and action. This scheme is what is known as the Wardha Scheme (later on renamed as Basic Education). Its main objective is to create national servants, fit for India who according to him should esche wviolence and hatred and follow methods of non-violence and love in all their life.

Gandhiji's ideas on Education.

According to Gandhiji, The primary education was a snare and a delusion. Even at the end of the college career most pupils do not know what they will do after completing their studies. More than 20 years of the growing period of life spent in such aimless manner, must inculcate in the pupils habits of procrastination hesitation, irresoluteness and inability to take decisions in the pursuits of life. Education is not worth its name unless it is national and useful ! Like all other educationists, he meant education as an "all - round drawing out of the best in child and man - body, mind and spirit.....Literacy in itself is no education. Literacy is information on various matters through reading and writing and capacity to follow logical or pseudo - logical controversy. It is not considered knowledge or even the medium of knowledge but is regarded only as a symbolical representation both of knowledge and of accomplished ignorance. The knowledge of these symbols is necessary and useful, if the sources of knowledge are alive. The means to keep these sources alive according to Gandhiji are work, observation, experience, experiment, service and love. Without these learning through books acts as hindrance to the development of the spiritual and rational faculties of the student and also impairs his physique. Almost in the same time, Dr. Albert Schweitzer remarked of Western methods of teaching thus : " We produced as if not agriculture, and handicrafts, but reading and writing were the beginning of civilisation ". Gandhiji wanted that the whole education should be imparted through some handicraft or industry, not teaching some handicrafts side by side with so-called liberal education. Then a craft becomes a " productive occupation " The abseuce of vocational

training has made the educated class almost unfit for productive work and has harmed them physically. "The spirit which actuates such basic education is that God did not create us to eat, drink, and be merry but to earn our bread by the sweat of our brow". He was convinced that without the use of our hands and feet our brains would atrophy and if it worked would be the home of Satan. This seems to be an echo of Rousseau's statement that our hands and feet are our first philosopher. If India has resolved to eschew violence, this system of education becomes an integral part of the discipline she has to go through. His scheme was intended primarily for the villages, because he wanted to resuscitate the villages, who form the bulk of Indian humanity. He also believed that the moment the primary question is solved the secondary one, of college education will be solved easily.

The fundamentals of Gandhiji's scheme are :—

1. Craft-centred education
2. Its self-supporting nature
3. Free and compulsory education
4. Mother tongue as the medium of instruction
5. The doctrine of non-violence.

Craft-Centred Process of Education : Gandhiji's method of educating children through and by crafts is referred to as 'correlation' with basic crafts. Hence the scheme is called Basic education. It is true that knowledge grows out of action, development of the mind should come through manual training. But to correlate all subjects through basic crafts like spinning, weaving, carpentry, agriculture, leather works, etc is, practically impossible. Project method in Russia come close to this, since they make some manual work the centre of education, not the whole of education through crafts alone like the Basic education. Every teachers is bound to correlate his lessons with allied subjects, topics and environment (life) so that the lessons will be made relevant and

interesting and meaningful and thus understood by pupils on wider and broader basis. But if this is stressed beyond a certain limit, it becomes, meaningless, dull and farcical. Real correlation is not through devices and instruction which the teacher employs in tying together things in themselves disconnected, but through continuity of subject matter and its relation and application to life and environment of the child,

Gandhiji had an aversion for book centred education given in schools, but education through crafts alone is equally pernicious. Schools, of course, must cease to be a place set apart to learn lessons only. Action is usually followed by reflection. Craft education is no substitute for book-centred education but an invaluable adjunct to it. It is even cruel to make a child skilled craftsman without giving also a full opportunity of widening his mind and sharing in the vast stores of wisdom and learning. As language clarifies thinking well-planned language training should be regarded as fundamentally important. Just like book learning makes one boring and passive, some types of craft or handwork can be mentally deadening though the child is physically active. To confine the growing child too long to the same kind of muscular activity is harmful both mentally and physically. Any manual labour ceased to be educative the moment it becomes thoroughly familiar and automatic. Hence both "Activity" learning and "book-learning" are necessary. Action and life are the real educators, but instructions and books will interpret it, enrich its meaning and enlarge its scope and application. Knowledge and skills must be systematised and organised and this is probably best and most economically done through the traditional class teaching. Further, the mastery of the fundamental knowledge and skills required for life in the world today cannot all be acquired incidentally or in correlation with crafts. There is therefore a definite need for formal teaching, even routine drill, before adequate mastery is obtained. But when it is a question of training a future naval officer, a mariner, an engineer, a builder, a farmer, the decision may be very different. Such occupations meet no trivial or transient needs. They have behind them a digni-

fied history and a distinct moral tradition. They have nursed fine characters and given scope to noble intellects and splendid practical powers. They cannot be worthily carried on without scientific knowledge or artistic culture. To school a boy in the tradition of one of these ancient occupations is to ensure that he will throw himself into his work with a spirit and with a zeal for mastery that teachers usually look for only in the elect. And it does more. Work which carries a boy directly towards the goal of his choice, work whose obvious usefulness gives him a sense of dignity and power often unlocks the finer energies of a mind which a general education would leave stupid and inert. The boy's whole intellectual vitality may be heightened, his sense of spiritual values quickened. In short the vocational training may become, in the strictest sense liberal.

Nobody can dispute the educational value of art and craft. The love of drawing, painting and making things seems to be instinctive in every normal child. By such means the child expresses ideas about the things which surround him long before he can use the written word and this outlet for his lively imagination must be fostered and developed to the full. But to make crafts the be-all of the entire process of education is to ask for too much.

Self supporting nature : Gandhiji felt that 'such education taken as a whole, can, and must be self-supporting; in fact, self support is the acid test of its reality'. His reason is the inability of a poor country like India to find the huge amount needed to introduce free and compulsory education for the millions of her children. He even went to the extent of saying that 'if the state takes charge of the children between 7 and 14 ages and trains their bodies and minds through productive labour, the public schools must be frauds and teachers idiots, if they cannot become self-supporting.' Learning and earning together is a laudable idea; job-oriented education is excellent. In fine, all education must have that as one of its main objectives. If education would help one to be self-supporting in later life, so much the better. Handicraft feature of this scheme is a solution to the problem of unemployment. But Gandhi's idea of

meeting the expenses of teachers' salaries appears to be out of reality, although the main reason adduced was that India is a poor country which could not afford to introduce free and compulsory education for the millions of her children. He says : " I am a firm believer in the principles of free and compulsory primary education for India. I also hold that we shall realize this only by teaching the children a useful vocation and utilising it as a means for cultivating their mental, physical and spiritual faculties. Let no one consider these economic calculation in connexion with education as sordid, or out of place. Higher education should be left to private enterprise and should be to meet national requirements." Vocational education is one thing and the craft-centred education, (and even that based on a limited number of basic crafts), is another, at least in practice. Though the parents need not pay any fees for the education of their children, education will not be free from the children's standpoint, for they will have to pay for their tuition by their productive manual labour, other expenses, recurring and non-recurring, being met by the state, as at present out of the taxes paid by the parents. Of course there is no harm in giving financial reward for the work turned out by the students, say in the kitchen, farm, poultry section, printing etc., but it would be preposterous to meet the salaries of the teachers and other expenses from the children's labour.

Use of mother tongue : The proper teaching of the mother tongue is the foundation of all education. Without the capacity to speak effectively and to read and write correctly and lucidly, no one can develop precision of thought or clarity of ideas. Moreover it is a means of introducing the child to the rich heritage of his people's ideas, emotions and aspirations and can therefore be made a valuable means of social education, whilst also instilling right ethical and moral values. Further, it is a natural outlet for the expression of the child's aesthetic sense and appreciation and if the proper approach is adopted, the study of literature becomes a source of joy and creative appreciation. This is an accepted truth all over the world. But a common *lingua franca* is necessary for India. As adult citizens they should be able to co-operate with their fellow countrymen below

ning to any part of the country. What should be the *lingua franca* and how it should be introduced is the trouble spot. Gandhiji felt that his scheme of education through village-crafts is the "spear-head of silent revolution" fraught with the most far-reaching consequences. He thought that by this, a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the village could be provided and thus go a long way towards eradicating some of the worst evils of social insecurity and poisoned relationship between the classes.... And all this would be accomplished without the horrors of a bloody class war or a colossal capital expenditure, such as would be involved in the mechanization of a vast continent like India. He then asked who would bell that cat and wondered whether the city folk would listen to him at all or whether it would remain a mere cry in the wilderness. We have to admit that his cry for Basic education remains one in the wilderness as he prophesied, although his philosophy of Non-violence is extolled throughout the world.

Non-Violence : On this subject Gandhiji says : We have communal quarrels not that they are peculiar to us...If we want to eliminate communal strife and international strife, we must start with foundations pure and strong by rearing our younger generation on the education I have adumbrated. That plan springs out of non-violence. We have to make them true representatives of our culture, our civilisation, of the true genius of our nation. We cannot do so otherwise than by giving them a course of self-supporting primary education. True education and violence are fundamentally opposed to each other. True education can be given through non-violence and this is the central idea in Gandhiji's educational scheme.

In a country like India with its various religions and communities, non - violence is the only solution we can think of to inculcate spirituality and at the same time to promote national unity - the two aims which cannot be ignored in a system of national education. This is the only way of reconciling communalism with nationalism. If we ignore religion, we shall lose that fundamental feature of spirituality for which India has been admired and we shall continue to suffer from the materialistic outlook on life, which is the bane

of the so - called civilised nations of today and which India is suffering from owing to her existing system of Godless education. Instead of divorcing religion from education, let us give it its legitimate place in the formation of youth so that a new generation fostered by the Wardha system of (Basic) Education may grow up with a spiritual as well as a national outlook - which shall be the glory of India and a model for other nations to imitate. That was Gandhiji's dream. How true is the statement even now !

People and nations are getting on badly with each other not because they cannot organise pacific relations but because the will to be pacific is lacking. This threat of a breakdown of the civilisation has come as a challenge to all human beings. Rome, Greece, Babylon, Egypt and many others are a standing testimony in proof of the fact that nations have perished before now because of their misdeeds. The question has arisen concerning the part that education could play in the work of reconstruction. The world's difficulties have arisen because men and women are what they are. Men and women are what they are because of their education. On that view a new kind of civilisation must come out of education. In the past, education has been a disappointment as an agent of social change. The central problem of social reconstruction is the creation of a stronger and better community than the one that is passing away, a community in which free men and women will find a richer and fuller life than they now enjoy and at the same time reach a fuller harmony with their fellows. To this Gandhiji's doctrine of Non-violence has a definite contribution to make in the development of better human relationships in home and school. Taken as a whole, Gandhiji's philosophy of education is excellent - interest in and dignity of human labour, to look upon all kinds of useful work as honourable, close relationship of education with child's life, social and physical environment and to carry the outlook and attitudes acquired in the school - environment into the wider world outside, thus giving the citizens of the future a keen sense of personal worth, dignity and efficiency and will strengthen in them a desire for self - improvement and social service in a co-operative community. But

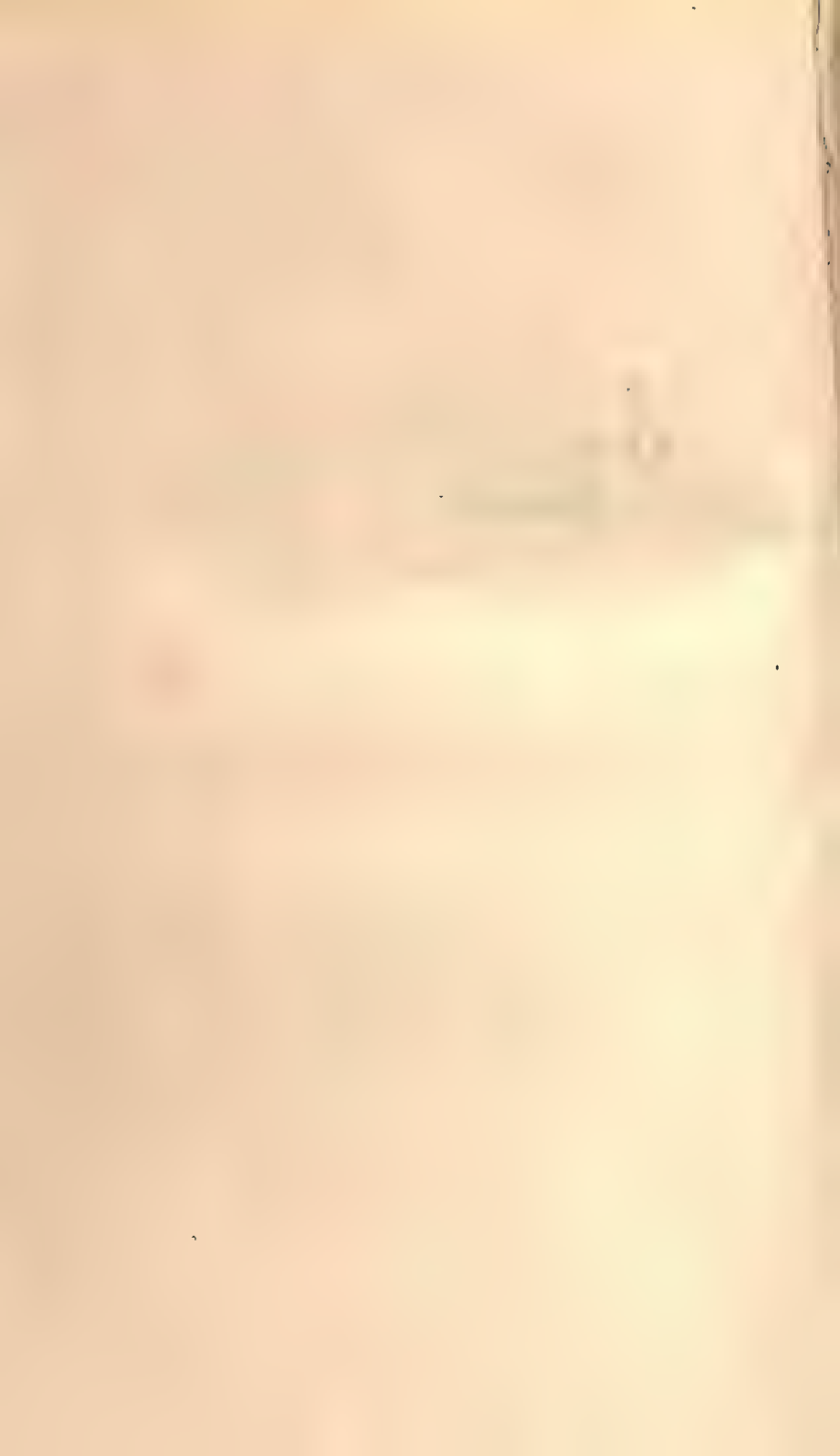
the way it is practised is far from satisfaction and the latest report of the Education Commission has put the last nail on its coffin.

Gandhiji stepped iike a new awakening into World History. He strove for the highest political goal and intentionally used only divine weapons. Truth and goodness were his weapons. He never left this path for his whole life and lo, and behold ; his success was as brilliant as the sun. And new hope awakened in many hearts. Could his truth find a place everywhere on earth ! Certainly - if it were lived upto. Gandhiji's influence was world - wide. He belonged to that group of philosophic statesmen, who were not only politically minded, but also tried spiritually to achieve a perfect relationship between nations and religious communities by constantly appealing to the mind and morals.



10 Mahatmaji's Message to Students

Fr. Thomas mootheden



10 Mahatmaji's Message to Students

Fr. Thomas Mootheden

In these days of student unrest, it is of prime importance to turn for inspiration and guidance to Mahatmaji who had an abiding interest in the welfare of the student community. There was something in the Mahatma which drew students to him individually and collectively. Wherever he went, students invariably requested him to address them. Innumerable students from all over India used to write to him for advice and guidance and he sent them replies either directly or published them in *Young India* or *Harijan*.

Mahatmaji saw in the young men the future of India. They are the young men and women from whom the future leaders of India are to rise. Unfortunately they are acted upon by every variety of influence. Non-violence offers them no attraction. A blow for a blow or two, a tooth for a tooth or two for one is an easily understandable proposition. It seems to yield immediate results though momentary. Since Mahatmaji's days, the student population has not change its attitude; but the circumstances have changed. Mahatmaji was fighting for the freedom of a nation under the control of a foreign power; while we are engaged in building up the nation into a power which has recognition at the international level. Further we have reached a stage in which nudism is civilisation, debauchery is art, sexuality is normal behaviour and God an enemy of human pleasures. The great bane of society is that it has lost or

disregard absolutely the fundamental or perennial values. In 1927, Mahatmaji spoke to the boys at Mysore : 'I have come in contact with thousands of students during the last ten years. They have confided their innermost secrets to me and have given me the right to enter their hearts. I know therefore all your difficulties and every one of your weaknesses. The only help of helpless is God. There is no greater punishment or misery for man than that his faith in God should be blasted. I confess with a deep sense of sorrow that faith is gradually disappearing from the student world. When I suggest to a Hindu boy to have recourse to **Ramanama**, he stares at me and wonders who Rama may be. When I ask a Muslim boy to read the Quran and fear God, he professes his inability to read the Quran and Allah is a mere lip-profession. How can I convince such boys that the first step to true education is a pure heart? If the education you get turn you away from God, I do not know how it is going to help you and how you are going to help the world. You are right in saying that I am endeavouring to see God through service of humanity, for I know that God is neither in heaven, nor down below, but in every one be a Hindu, Brahman, Vaishya, Sudra" or a Panchama, a Mussulman, a Parsi, A Christianman or woman.

Here is another advice of the Mahatmaji to students : "I say to the boys and girls : Never lose faith in God and therefore in yourselves and remember that if you allow refuge to a single evil thought, a single sinful thought, remember that you lack that faith. Untruthfulness, uncharitableness, violence, sensuality - all these things are strangers to that faith. The Bhagavad Gita proclaims it in almost every verse. If I was to sum up the sermon on the Mount, I find the same answer. My reading of the Quran has led me to the same conclusion. No one can harm us so much as we can ourselves. If you are therefore brave boys and brave girls, you will fight desperately and valiantly against the whole brood of these thoughts. No sinful act was ever done in this world without the prompting of a sinful thought. You have to exercise strict vigilance over every thought welling up in your breast".

In the midst of the endless variety of religions, there is a fundamental unity in the insistence upon truth and innocence. On this matter Mahatmaji writes : " If you boys will take your stand defiantly always on Truth and Innocence, you will feel that you have built on solid foundation. Truthfulness is the master key. Do not lie under any circumstances whatsoever. Keep nothing secret, take your teachers and elders into confidence and make a clean breast of everything to them. Bear ill-will to none : do not say an evil thing of anyone behind his back; above all to thine own self be true so that you are false to no one else. Truthful dealing, ever in the least things of life is the only secret of a pure life ". Mahatmaji's insistence upon **Sathyagraha**, holding fast to truth is all illustration of this doctrine.

What he preached he practised. Here is an incident which occurred at the examination during his first year at the high school " Mr. Giles, the Educational Inspector had come on a visit of Inspection. He had set five words to write as a spelling exercise. One of the words was **Kettle**. I had misspelt it. The teacher tried to prompt me with the point of his boot, but I would not be prompted. It was beyond me to see that he wanted me to copy the spelling from my neighbour's slate, for I had thought that the teacher was there to supervise us against copying. The result was every boy except myself were found to have spelt every word correctly. Only I had been stupid. The teacher tried later to bring this stupidity home to me but without effect. I never could learn the art of copying."

The best textbook for religions instruction according to Mahatmaji is teachers, example. He writes : " Religions instructions I discovered was imparted best by teachers living the religion themselves. I have found that boys imbibe more from the teachers' own lives than they do from the books they read to them or the lectures they deliver to them with their lips. I have discovered to my great joy that boys and girls have unconsciously a faculty of penetration whereby they read the thoughts of their teachers. Woe to the teacher who teaches one thing with his lips and carries another in his

breast..... All your scholarship, all your study of shakespeare wordsworth would be in vain, if at the same time you do not build your character and attain mastery over your thoughts and actions. When you have attained self mastery and learn to control your passions you will not utter notes of despair."

Mahatmaji was against strikes by students and pupils, except on the rarest occasion. Even if the student population were to reject him altogether he wont desist from giving the following advice : " I hold it to be quite wrong on the part of students and pupils to take part in political demonstrations and party politics. Such ferment interferes with serious study and unfits students for solid work as future citizens...Students cannot afford to have party politics. They hear all parties, as they read all sorts of books, but their business is to assimilate the truth of all and reject the balance. This is the only worthy attitude that they can take. Power politics should be unknown to the student world. Immediately they dabble in that class of work, they cease to be students and will therefore fail to serve their country in its crisis....Let them therefore think fifty times before rejecting my advice.

In these days of student violence unseen and unheard of ever before, Mahatmaji's doctrine of truth and non-violence should be household slogans. He writes : "Ahimsa and Truth are so intertwined that is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. They are like two sides of a coin or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say which is the obverse and which the reverse ? Nevertheless, **Ahimsa** is the means; truth is the end. Means to be means must always be within our reach and so **Ahimsa** is our supreme duty. If we take care of the means, we are bound to reach the end sooner or later....**Ahimsa** being the means, we are naturally more concerned with it every day life. It is **ahimsa** therefore that our masses have to be educated in. Education in truth follows from it as natural end. **Ahimsa** is my God and Truth is my God. When I look for **ahimsa**, Truth says : ' Find it out through me '. When I look for Truth' **Ahimsa** says : ' Find it out through me '... Pro-

phets and avatars have taught the lessons of **ahimsa** more or less. Not one of them has professed to teach **himsa**. And how should it be otherwise ? **Himsa** does not need to be taught. Man as animal is violent; but as spirit he is non-violent; the moment he awakes to the spirit within, he cannot remain violent. Either he progresses towards **ahimsa** or rushes to his doom. That is why the prophets and avatars have taught the lesson of truth, harmony, brotherhood, justice etc.—all attributes of **ahimsa**.

For Mahatmaji, **ahimsa** is infinite love so that perfect **ahimsa** is divine. In this country reverberating with the slogan, **Inquilab Zindabad**, the following words of Mahatmaji will sound like the thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians :

“ Love never claims, it ever gives. Love ever suffers, never resents itself. Where there is love there is life; hatred leads to destruction. Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable. I have no weapon but love to wield authority over anyone.”

It is important that the young student becomes conversant with Mahatmaji's doctrine of **brahmacharya**, which literally means conduct which puts us in touch with **Brhama** or God. I may quote here at length from Mahatmaji : ” **Brahmacharya** consists in the fullest control over all the senses..... Popularly it has come to mean mere physical control over the organ of generation. This narrow meaning has debased **Brahmacharya** and made its practice all but impossible. Control over the organ of generation is impossible without proper control over all the sense. They are all interdependent. Mind on the lower plane is included in the senses. Without control over the mind, mere physical control, even if it can be attained for a time is of little or no use. **Brahmacharya** must be observed in thought word and deed. It may be harmful to suppress the body, if the mind is at the same time allowed to go stray. Where the mind wanders the body must follow sooner or later....

“ Absolute renunciation, absolute **brahmacharya** is the ideal state. If you dare not think of it, marry, by all means; but even

then live a life of self control. Sex urge is a fine and noble thing. There is nothing to be ashamed of in it. But it is meant only for the act of creation. Any other use of it is a sin against God and humanity. If we begin to believe that indulgence in animal passion is necessary, harmless and sinless, we shall want to give reins to it and shall be powerless to resist it. Whereas we educate ourselves to believe that such indulgence is harmful, sinful, unnecessary and can be controlled, we shall discover that self-restraint is perfectly possible....

Life without **brahmacharya** appears to me to be insipid and animal like. The brute by nature knows no self restraint. Man is man because he is capable of and only in so far as he exercise self restraint. What formerly appeared to me extravagant praise of brahmacharya in our religions books seems now, with increasing clearness every day, to be absolutely proper and found on experience..... .

"I hold that a life of perfect continence in thought speech and action is necessary for reaching spiritual perfection. And a nation that does not possess such man is poorer for the want..... .

"Married people should understand the true function of marriage and should not violate the law of **brahmacharya** except with a view to having a child for the continuation of race.....

"This is a hard thing to do : but we have been born into this world that we might wrestle with difficulties and temptations and conquer them ; and he who has not the will to do it can never enjoy the supreme blessing of true health...Soul force comes only through God's grace and God's grace never descends upon a man who is slave to lust."

A great part of Mahatmaji's advices to students appears in the replies he gives to students and teachers who propose their problems to him. In the Harijan dated 22nd October 1938, he wrote :

"I have two letters from school masters besides others from laymen complaining or students' rowdyism in Travancore. The

principal of the C. M. S. College, Kottayam says that the students blocked the passage of those who wanted to attend the classes. They twice turned away girls who did not listen to them. They rushed at the classes and made noises making the classes impossible. This violent participation by students in a struggle which its authors claim to be absolutely non-violent, makes progress difficult, if not impossible. So far as I know, the leaders of the movement do not want the students even if they wish to participate, to depart in any way from the non-violent way. Obstruction, rowdyism and the like are naked violence. I am credited with influence over students. If I have any I should ask them to serve non-violence in thought, word and deed. If however the forces of violence cannot be controlled by those who are in charge of the movement, it may be a question for them whether in the interest of the movement itself, it is not wise to suspend civil disobedience."

In the Harijan dated 31st December 1938, Mahatmaji writes about the problem of a college girl in Punjab which she sent to him in writing. I may summarise her letter thus ;

"Girls and grown up women cannot walk along the streets without being forced to encounter indecent language. Cyclists follow us or round us and cajole us to indecent things. Once a cyclist rounded me up twice. When the third time he came to round me up and say indecent things, I threw my book at the cycle and roared out : Dare you repeat your pranks ? He could with difficulty keep up his balance, put on speed and flew from us. How can girls apply the principle of **ahimsa** in these circumstances. You will be painfully surprised to know that during Diwali and such other holidays newspapers come out with notices warning women from venturing outdoors even to see the illuminations. This one fact should enable you to know to what straits we are reduced in this part of the world ?"

Mahatmaji showed this letter to another Punjabi girl. She said that it was the common experience of most girls. Another

girl from Lucknow complained of boys sitting in the row behind in cinema theatres using all kinds of language and even molesting them.

Mahatmaji congratulated the physically weak girl who flinged her book with all her might against the cyclist and escaped the passionate young man. 'In the cases of rude remarks, Mahatmaji remarks, "there need be no perturbation, but there should be no indifference. All such cases should be published in the papers. Name of the offenders should be published when they are traced. There should be no false modesty about exposing the evil..... But I have to fear that the modern girl loves to be Juliet to half a dozen Romeos. She loves adventure. My correspondent seems to represent the unusual type. The modern girl dresses not to protect herself from wind, rain and sun but to attract attention. She improves upon nature by painting herself and looking extraordinary. The non-violent way is not for such girls... But if perchance they find, as they may, that their very chastity is in danger of being violated, they must develop courage enough to die rather than yield to the brute in man... But this heroism is possible only for those who have trained themselves for it. Those who have no living faith protect themselves from indecent behaviour of unchivalrous youth.'

These are the more salient features of the message of Mahatmaji to students. He has much to say about the part that can be played by the students in spinning, khadi movement and the uplift of the Harijan, **ahimsa** and service to nation are what Mahatmaji expects of every Indian student. Today, however, dishonesty, **himsa** and disservice have become the common rule. Mahatmaji's ideals are given lip service by some devotees of Mahatmaji in this centenary year; their heart is immersed in selfishness communalism and hypocrisy. May the rising generation be imbued with the spirit of truth **amisa** and self sacrifice, the fundamental ideals of Gandhian leadership. May every Indian student aim at becoming another Gandhi in love of God and love of man.

11 What does Gandhi mean to Youth of Today

B. L. Sharma



11 What does Gandhi mean to Youths of Today

B. L. Sharma

"The charge is often brought against us that we are good only at oratorical displays and fruitless momentary demonstrations, but fail when we are called upon to do work that requires cohesion, co-operation, grit and unflinching determination. The students have a splendid opportunity of falsifying the charge. Will they rise to the occasion? And this the students will surely get if they will engage in some constructive national activity."

This is how Gandhi throws challenge to the students and youths of the country and at the same time shows the way to meet it. Gandhi presents himself to the eyes of youths not as 'Mahatma' but as 'Karmvir' an activist full of dynamism and determination. Right from his early life in South Africa to the last day of his life, he devoted his whole being to numerous activities of varying nature. And every action he performed with utmost perfection in all details. He had a true scientific mind and a passion for experimentation in all walks of life non-violent methods, food, health, spinning wheel, agriculture, education etc. This spirit of experimentation brought him nearer and nearer to truth and enabled him to fight against injustice, intolerance, superstition and irrationality. Today, youth is agitating. The great upsurge in country's students is a good sign. But due to attachment to comforts and care for the career, lack of hard work, clarity of vision, determination, positive attitude and constructive out-look, they have not been able to make any impact

on national life by showing a new way. Our youths will surely do well if they turn to Karmvir Gandhi.

To youths of today, Gandhi stands as a great rebel who did not accept the established norms of the society. Where ever he found injustice and exploitation, he fought against them unceasingly. But he was a rebel of his own type. He found for his fight a new weapon non-violent Satyagrah. He had faith in the intrinsic goodness of man and hence he fought against the wrongs but at the same time loved the wrong doer. Thus he gave a new turn to history as writes Arnold Toynbee - "Gandhi found a way of bringing about political change, a transfer of political power on the grand scale without bloodshed and without animosity." Gandhi remarkably combined rebellion with compassion. He said, "My goal is friendship with the world and I can combine the greatest love with the greatest opposition to wrong." And in this process, he could not only remove great evils but also succeeded in purifying and elevating the man himself. When our young men see corruption, abuse of power and money, selfishness, communal frenzy, acts of immorality outdated pattern of educational system, their blood boils but they seem to be disillusioned. Gandhi shows them the way.

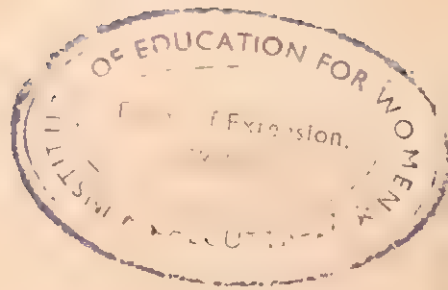
Gandhi means self-confidence and confidence in the society. During many critical moments, he exhibited in an astonishing way his self-confidence and this made an ordinary man like Gandhi the greatest Indian of our time and a great soul rarely found in human history. When Acharya Kriplani met him for the first time, he argued with him on the question of violence and non-violence. Kriplani told Gandhi-"You say you can win Swarajya by non-violence. I am a Professor of history and I know that no nation in the world has attained freedom by non-violence." Gandhiji's reply was characteristic, "You are a Professor of history but I am maker of history." By his various satyagrahas and Swadeshi movement, Gandhi kindled in the millions of Indians the great virtue of self-confidence and self reliance. He made the Indian masses feel a new sense of dignity. By precept and even more by example he infused

in the Indian people a new consciousness of strength. Out of dust he raised up men. He moulded a down-trodden people into a great nation. This he could do because he had confidence in them. "Gandhi had faith in people," says Dr. Schumacher, "so he was able to move mountains. But the legacy of Gandhi has long since been buried under the self-contratulatory chatter of his alienated successors, who are not prepared to believe that anything latent and great can be found in ordinary people, or that such latent greatness could in any way be mobilised for a common purpose." The greatest harm this attitude has done to nation is the dependence on foreign countries for aid and expert knowledge which has done a great damage to the morale of the nation. The craze in our students to go abroad is natural corollary of this attitude. The lack of faith in common masses has also created a widening gap between educated people and masses. Here is a challenge to our students and Gandhi shows the path. 'In-stead of taking their walks along beaten paths, the students should walk to the villages within easy reach of their institutions and study the condition of the village folk and befriend them. . They should devote the whole of their vacation to village service". Our young men will have identify themselves with the masses, Since the process of achieving complete independence is not yet over. They will have to take scientific knowledge to villages, to educate people in democratic system. And this will naturally require a great deal of scrifice and devotion. They have to forget the comforts and conveniences, and no allurements should deviate them from their mission. Gandhi shows the example. When India became independent on 15th August 1947, grand celebrations were arranged in Delhi to mark the long awaited day. People were eagerly and naturally looking for Gandhi in these celebrations. But the old man was wandering in the streets of far off Noakhali and its surroundings heeling the sufferings of people.

To youths of today, Gandhi stands for the openness of mind. Though he was a man of deep convictions and an iron will, yet he was always ready to understand others viewpoint without any reservation. As a seeker of truth, he discarded all dogmas and blind

faiths either in the name of religion or social customs. He tried to take and assimilate whatever he found rational and good in every religion. Whoever came in his contact, he inspired him to rise above the narrow considerations of language, region, caste or religion. He said, "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other peoples houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave." Here one finds a remarkable blending of broad outlook and firm convictions. Though his activities were confined to India, yet he always thought for the whole humanity. He once said, "I want my country to be free. I do not want a fallen and prostrate India. I want an India which is free and enlightened. Such an India, if necessary, should be prepared to die so that humanity may live."

Our students and youths are the hope of the future. They are full of energy and enthusiasm but they seem to be disillusioned. Gandhi shows the right path. Why then should they wait ?



12 Gandhi as an Educationist

B. P. Lulla



12 Gandhiji as an Educationist

B. P. Lolla

Introduction

Very few great men have displayed such a versatile life and character as Gandhiji. Volumes are already written on his biography and work in several fields to which he contributed his services, talents and energies in his life-time. Many authors have studied and analysed his theories and schemes of education and have produced learned treatises and scholarly documents. Some have even received Ph. D. degrees on the systematic probing and presentation of the educational thoughts of Gandhiji. No one denies that Gandhiji was a great educationist besides being a political philosopher, a social reformer and a humanitarian. But this paper attempts to analyse objectively the justification of his title as an educationist which he rightly deserved rather than demanded by any formal position in educational administration or possession of qualifications in the field of education.

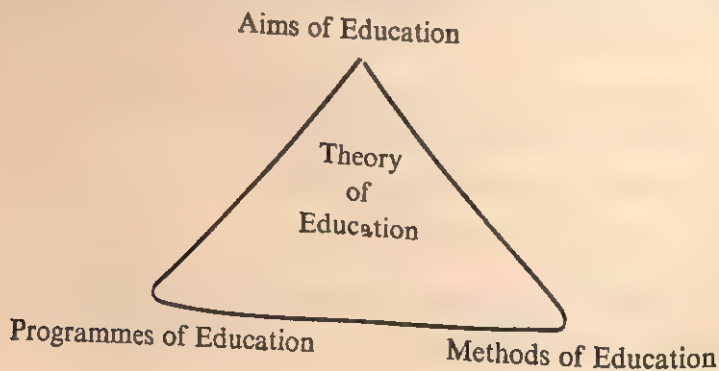
An educationist is described by some of the following characteristics in view of the expert opinion :

1. One who has attained high academic qualifications and has preferably received a special training in the discipline of education.
2. One who has taught and inspired others or influenced their thinking and behaviour.

3. One who has evolved a consistent educational theory and has shown a clear conviction or vision about the right values and aims of education.
4. One who has exemplified or demonstrated ones philosophy of education through day-to-day practice in ones life.
5. One who has given a practical scheme of education and has successfully experimented with ones ideas about education.

Applying the above criteria to Gandhiji, it is crystal clear that Gandhiji satisfied all the requirements of a real educationist. He was not one of those formal educationists who can boast of mere academic qualifications and training or experience of teaching in educational institutions. But he was one of those merited educationists who possess the requisite qualities described in the statements given above. No doubt he did not have a university degree in science of education or a special training in education, nor did he spend life in teaching at a school or college. But he had developed a complete philosophy of education for the whole country, had worked out a concrete scheme of education after a good deal of experimentation and had influenced thinking as well as behaviour of millions in India as well as in the other countries.

Now, let us analyse in details his theoretical foundations of education including aims of education and his plans or programmes of education and his methods or techniques of achieving the goals laid down by his theory. There is always a logical correlation in all the three phases of any systematic theory of education viz., aims, programmes and methods.



Gandhiji showed a deep insight and vision as an educationist since he carefully observed the above correlation and developed a complete system of education which can be rightly termed as 'Gandhian Education.'

Gandhiji's Theory of Education

His theory of education is humanistic as it is rooted in his values and basic philosophy of life. The two well-known tenets of his living were : Truth and Non-violence. He believed in the existence of God and in his view there is no other God than Truth. "Truth is God" was Gandhiji's motto. Again the only means for the realization of Truth according to him is Non-violence or **Ahimsa**. The aim of human life is the realization of Truth and all the efforts including education should be geared to that.

He evolved his theory of education on the basis of his high values he held in life and wished every-one to attain. Education must serve as means to that end. Describing the real purpose of education, he stated his view as follows :

By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man - body, mind and spirit. Literacy is not the end of education nor even the beginning. It is one of the means where by man and woman can be educated. Literacy in itself is no education.¹

Thus, in Gandhiji's educational theory the development of the personality of child is more important than mere literacy or knowledge of different subjects. In other words he believed in life-centred as well as child-centred education. Besides learning of Three R's in school, he insisted on development of Three H's-Hand, Heart and Head.

There was no occasion when Gandhiji had a chance to enunciate or write fully his complete theory of education but in Yervada

1. Harijan 31-7-37.

prison in 1932 he listed on paper some values and principles of education on which Wardha Scheme was later developed. These postulates are given hereunder :

1. Boys and girls should be taught together.
2. Their time should be mostly spent on manual work under the supervision of the teacher. Manual work should be considered as part of education.
3. Work should be entrusted to each boy and girl after ascertaining his or her inclinations.
4. The child should know the why and the wherefore of every process.
5. General knowledge should be imparted to the child as soon as it is able to understand things. This knowledge should precede literary education.
6. The hand of the child should be trained to draw geometrical figures before he learns to write, that is good handwriting should be taught from the beginning.
7. The child should learn to read before he is able to write; i. e., he should learn to recognize letters as if they were pictures and then draw their figures.
8. By this method and by word of mouth, the child should acquire much knowledge before he is eight years old.
9. Children should not be compelled to learn anything.
10. The child should be interested in whatever he learns.
11. The process of teaching should be conducted in a play-way, for play is an essential part of education.
12. All education should be imparted through the mothertongue of the child.
13. Every Indian child should learn Hindu-Urdu (i. e. Hindustani) as a national language before his literary training commences.
14. The second stage of the child's education begins when he is and lasts up to sixteen.

15. Manual labour has a place in education during this period also. The time for literary training should be increased according to need.
16. The child should learn some vocation as preparation for his future life.
17. He should acquire a general knowledge of World History, Geography, Botany, Astronomy, Arithmetic, Geometry and Algebra
18. A boy or a girl of sixteen years should know sewing and cooking.
19. In the third stage which begins at sixteen and ends at twenty five, a young man or woman should receive education according to his or her desire and circumstances.
20. The education commencing at the age of nine should be self-supporting. The student, while he is learning, should be engaged in such a vocation that its produce may meet the expenses of the school.
21. Production should, no doubt, begin right from the start. But it may not be enough to meet the expenses during the initial years.
22. Teachers cannot possibly have big salaries; but they must get enough to maintain themselves. They should be animated by a spirit of service. They must have a good character.
23. Huge and costly buildings are not necessary for education.
24. English can and should have a place in the syllabus only as a language. Just as Hindi is our lingua franca, English is a language of international intercourse and commerce.²

2. M. S. Patel, The Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, Navjivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad 1952. p.p. 98-99.

Gandhi's Aims of Education :

Having analysed Gandhi's theory of education, it is easy to deduce the aims of education he upheld for the country.

1. All-round development : Gandhiji repeatedly emphasized that education should afford an opportunity to a child for self-realization and full development of his or her potentialities. He said : " True education is that which draws out and stimulated the spiritual, intellectual and physical faculties of children."³

He also pointed out the method by which the all-round development of child could be achieved. He stated : " You have to train the boys in one occupation or another. Round this special occupation you will train up his mind, his hand writing, his artistic sense and so on ".⁴ It is clear that Gandhiji was not totally 'against the 'bread and butter' aim of education as it is known in the popular language. He laid a greater emphasis on the education of three H's (Hand, Heart, and Head) than on that of three H's (Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic). Unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, Gandhiji would not be satisfied with the education system. In his life-time, he severely criticized the present system of education as a meaningless and wasteful exercise for children.

2. Self-reliance : Gandhiji desired that education system should be self-supporting and each boy or girl should become self-reliant by learning a craft or occupational skill for livelihood.

He wanted education to be a kind of insurance against unemployment. Elaborating the same idea he further said, " The child at the age of 14, that is, after finishing a seven year course should be discharged as an earning unit. Even now the poor people's

3. Harijan, 11-9-37.

4. Ibid.

children automatically lend a helping hand to their parents-the feeling at the back of their minds being what shall they give me to eat, if I do not work with them ? That is an education in itself. Even so the State takes charge of the child at seven and returns it to the family as an earning unit. You impart education and simultaneously cut at the root of unemployment ".⁵

The craft was presumed by Gandhiji to make child a self-supporting citizen who would not depend on others for his future living. He wanted every student to learn while he earns and to earn while he learns. Thus he attached a great significance and dignity to labour in life and work in education.

The Report on National Education by the Kothari Commission (1964-66) reiterates the principal of work experience in education which Gandhiji emphasized long ago. The Commission writes : " We recommend that work experience should be introduced as an integral part of all education - general or vocational. We define work-experience as participation in productive work in school, in the home, in a workshop, on a farm, in a factory or in any other productive situation."⁶ What Commission has pointed out for free India today, Gandhiji visualized before the country achieved independence. The Chief characteristic of the Wardha Scheme of Gandhiji was self-reliance of all the pupils, teachers and institutions.

3. Social Service : A question is often asked whether Gandhi's aim of education was socialistic or individualistic ? The two major goals explained above largely bear upon the individual and his growth and development in life. They lead one to think that Gandhiji was individualistic in his philosophy of education. It is quite true that Gandhi was a staunch supporter of individual free-

5. Harijan 18-9-37.

6. Report of the Kothari Commission, 1964-66, P. 7.

dom but he also valued social organisation or society and its welfare. But he believed that any change or progress in society should be brought through peaceful and non-violent means.

He once wrote : " If India also tried to build up the new society based on cooperation by means of violence. ...Good brought about through force destroyed individuality. Only when the change was effected through the persuasive power of non-violent non-cooperation (i. e. love), could the foundation of individuality be preserved and real, abiding progress be assured for the world."⁷

Gandhiji maintained that social service should be an essential part of education but not the complete socialisation of individuals as its aim. He used to advise students to inculcate the spirit of service and self-sacrifice. Addressing the college students once, he said :

Your education, if it is a vital thing, must shed its fragrance in your surroundings. You must devote a certain portion of your time daily to serving the people around in a practical manner. You must, therefore, be prepared to take the spade, the broomstick and the basket. You must become voluntary scavengers of this holy place. That would be the richest part of your education, not learning by heart literary thesis.⁸

Again Gandhiji's ideal of social service had no frontiers as he was a great humanitarian. He equated service to any society or country with service to humanity or God. He said : "I am a humble servant of India and in trying to serve India I serve humanity at large. I discovered in my early days that the service of India is not inconsistent with the service of humanity."

Thus Gandhiji synthesized the ideals of social service and individual development in the system of education. He considered

7. Harijan, 9-3-47.

8. Young India, 14-11-1929.

them both as interdependent to such an extent that one is inconceivable apart from the other. In his view, individuality can be developed in a social medium, for man's nature is both social and self-regarding. Society and the individual cannot be separated.

Gandhiji really succeeded in striking a balance between the individual and society while presenting his views on the aims of true education.

Gandhiji's Programme of Education :

The next important phase of Gandhiji's system of education is the programme based on his philosophy of education. He wanted to reform India by creating a non-violent social order based on non-exploitation and decentralization. Hence he evolved a scheme of education in 1937 after a deep thought and long consideration. His scheme is popularly known as the Wardha Scheme or Basic National Education.

The main aspects of the scheme were shaped in a conference attended by some outstanding national leaders and patriotic educationists of the time. The conference then appointed a committee with the late Dr. Zakir Hussain as its chairman with the object of preparing a detailed syllabus of the scheme. The main features of the scheme are as follows :

1. Free Compulsory Education : Education should be free and compulsory for all boys and girls between the ages of seven and fourteen. Girls may be withdrawn after the completion of their twelfth year if the guardians so desire it. This universal minimum education is called Basic National Education by the Zakir Hussain Committee.

2. Craft as the Centre of Education : Education should be imparted through some craft or productive work which should provide the nucleus of all the other instruction provided in the school.

The Committee reports, "Modern educational thought is practically unanimous in commending the idea of educating children through some suitable form of productive work. This method is considered to be the most effective approach to the problem of providing an integral, all-sided education."¹⁰

The Committee laid down certain conditions for securing the full advantages of this method .

"First, the craft or productive work chosen should be rich in educative possibilities. It should find natural points of correlation with important human activities and interests, and should extend into the whole content of the school curriculum..... . The object of this new educational scheme is not primarily the production of craftsmen able to practise some craft mechanically, but rather the exploitation for educative purposes of the resources implicit in craft work. This demands that productive work should not only form a part of the school curriculum-its craft side but should also inspire the method of teaching all other subjects. Stress should be laid on;the principles of co-operative activity, planning accuracy, initiative and individual responsibility in learning."¹¹

3. Self-supporting Training : One of the most important features of the scheme is its self-supporting aspect. Gandhiji upheld that the child at the age of fourteen, after finishing seven years course should be discharged as an earning unit. His plan aimed at imparting education and solving the problem of unemployment in India.

Gandhiji even expected that the money value of the work done at school by children should also cover the pay of teachers and some other expenses of the school. The State should undertake to utilize

10. Hindustani Talimi Sangh : Educational Reconstruction, Wardha Sevagram, p. 96.

11. Ibid., p. 122

of the craft and to provide for marketing facilities for any excess of goods produced.

4. Mother-tongue as the Medium : The problem of the medium of instruction was resolved by adopting mother-tongue of the child as the medium. Gandhiji was against the foreign medium of English at the school stage. Hence, in basic education scheme English had no place at all.

5. Citizenship Skills : The Wardha Scheme did not ignore the ideal of preparing children as good citizens. It was visualized that children of free India would need to know the right values of social, political and economic life of the country. They must also inculcate the proper attitudes and skills as good citizens of India. The Zakir Hussain Committee stressed the ideal of citizenship in the following words :

The new generation must at least have an opportunity of understanding its own problems and rights and obligations. A completely new system is necessary to secure the minimum of education of the intelligent exercise of the rights and duties of citizens. Secondly, in modern times, the intelligent citizen must be an active member of society able to repay in the form of some useful service what he owes to it as a member of an organized civilized community. An education which produces drags and parasites-whether rich or poor - stands condemned. It not only impairs the productive capacity and efficiency of society but also engenders a dangerous and immoral mentality. This scheme is designed to produce workers, who will look upon all kinds of useful work including manual labour, even scavenging as honourable, and who will be both able and willing to stand on their own feet. Such a close relationship of the work done at school to the work of community will also enable the children to carry the outlook and attitudes acquired in the school environment into the wider world., outside. Thus the new scheme which a keen sense of personal worth, dignity and

efficiency, and will strengthen in them the desire for self-improvement and social service in a co-operative community.¹²

6. Co-operative Community : The Wardha scheme was based on the idea of developing a cooperative community by producing the motive of social service in children through all the group activities of the school. The programme of the training for the early seven years was so framed that children learn to live an effective community life and to share their rights and responsibilities with the others.

7. Life-centred Curriculum : According to the philosophy behind the scheme, the curriculum was so designed for children that they grow as self-reliant and well-rounded citizens. Again it centred round a craft activity or productive work useful in the life of children.

It was stressed that the contents of the general curriculum should be correlated with or conveyed through the craft. In order to work out an effective and natural coordination of the various subjects and to make the syllabus a means of adjusting the child intelligently and actively to his environment, the Zakir Hussain committee chose three fundamental understandings or experiences as the foci of the curriculum viz, the physical environment, the social environment and the craft work. The craft work was considered as the central point since it was expected to utilize the resources of the former for the purpose of the latter.

The subjects outlined for the scheme were as follows :

1. Basic Craft : (such as agriculture, spinning and weaving cardboard work, woodwork, and metal work)
2. Mother Tongue : (developing abilities of conversation reading writing and appreciation of literature)

12. Ibid. pp 123-124.

3. Mathematics : (knowledge of numerical operations related to craft and skill in book-keeping)
4. Social Studies : (including study of history, geography, civics and current events)
5. General Science : (including nature study, zoology, hygiene physical culture, chemistry and knowledge of the stars.)
6. Drawing : (related to the pictorial representation in nature study and craft during the first four years and emphasis on design, decoration and mechanical drawing during the last three years)
7. Music : (choral singing as well as orientation in Indian ragas and tals)
8. Hindustani : (a compulsory subject to have a reasonable acquaintance with a common lingua franca of India.)

Thus, it is quite clear to see the consistency in the programme education and the aims of education within the theoretical frame of Gandhiji's system of education. Views of the Kothari Commission (1964-66) are not different from what Gandhiji said about education in India long back.

Gandhiji's Methods of Education :

As the philosophy so are the methods in the Gandhian system of education. A brief analysis of the methods of teaching evaluation and organisation will reveal the basic relationship observed between the two.

1. **Methods of Teaching :** The Wardha scheme was based on the well known dictum of Dewey 'Learning by doing'. Although Gandhiji and John Dewey were born in different countries and had different mission in their lives they struck the same note in their educational philosophy by a strange coincidence. The method of teaching accepted by the Gandhian education can be classified as Activity Method or Practical Method since the activity or practice

dominates the class-room instruction . Besides, the teacher in such a scheme was expected to be well versed and trained in correlation of all the subjects both to the craft and to the life situations. Proper training of teachers was emphasized to implement the scheme. No formal text-books were given a place in the scheme. The three foci of teaching method under the system were : craft, correlation and community.

2. Methods of evaluation : The usual procedure of external year-end examination was not given weightage but the internal assessment by the teachers themselves was found to be the suitable measure. A teacher could certify if the child had successfully completed his study. The promotion to the next class would also be based on the day-to-day work of children and constant observation of the teacher. The present paper examination on the mass scale was denounced as a meaningless procedure in Basic National Education.

3. Methods of Organisation : The Wardha Scheme was truly known as the Basic National Education for Rural India. Gandhiji prepared such a plan for education as could be organised economically in a poor country with increasing population. It was designed to be a self-supporting system in finance and participatory in organisation since pupils and teachers were expected to plan together, to produce together and to share the benefits and risks together. There was a real participation and a fair partnership of the pupils and the teachers in the organisation of education. A great significance was attached to cooperation, discipline, sacrifice and healthy teacher-pupil relationships. State control was expected to be very limited and only confined to providing physical facilities for Basic Schools without interfering with the activities or curriculum or work procedures of the school.

Conclusion

Besides giving a practicable scheme of education to the country as a great educationist, Gandhiji was exemplary of his educational

philosophy in his life. He believed in the dictum : 'An example is better than precept' and this is the chief characteristic of a good teacher. He did what he meant and he meant what he did. Every act of his life was lesson to the world. Gandhiji could be classified as the top-ranking educationist of his times. We can hardly find his match even today in our age.

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13 Gandhi's Educational Philosophy : An unprecedented approach

Baikuntha Nath Tripathy



13 Gandhi's Educational Philosophy: An unprecedented approach

Baikuntha Nath Tripathy

The system of Education introduced by the Britishers was purely a literary type of education and it produced only clerks for Government Offices. It had no value from practical point of view. Children who received such a literary education did not know how to use their hands. In case, they did not get suitable employment, they felt frustrated in life. Theoretical knowledge could not help them to face difficult situation. Education was imparted only to a few people at the top. Education of the mass was neglected, percent age of literacy was very low. Gandhi saw that it was not suitable for a free and democratic country like India. "By education I mean an allround drawing of the best in child and man-body, mind and spirit" said Gandhiji. Education according to Gandhiji, should be imparted through manual work so as to enable the children to be productive members of the society. "We have upto now concentrated on sniffing children's mind with all kinds of information without ever thinking of stimulating or developing them. Let us now cry a halt and concentrate on educating the child properly through manual work, not as aside activity, but as a prime means of intellectual activity". (Gandhiji). That means manual work or craft was not to be an additional subject in the curriculum, but it was to be the pivot round which knowledge about other subjects of the school

was to revolve. Gandhian scheme of Education came to be known as Basic Education or Nai Tamil.

The most important features of Gandhian Scheme of Education are as follows:

1. Education should be imparted through crafts such as spinning, weaving, gardening, carpentry, wood-work leather-work, drawing, printing etc.
2. Education should be related to the physical and social environment of the child.
3. Mother-tongue should be the medium of instruction.
4. Teachers' pay should be met from the sale proceeds of the goods manufactured by the students.
5. A Basic School should be administered through co-operative and self-governing methods.
6. There should be free and compulsory education for all boys and girls from 6 to 14 years.

The following points should be kept in mind for selecting a suitable craft for a school.

1. The craft should have close relation with the life and interest of the children.
2. The craft should be basic craft so that knowledge about school subjects can be correlated with it.
3. The craft should be such that the whole education of the body, mind, and soul can be imparted through it.

Gandhi advocated the principle of education of the child through manual work, because it had the following advantages for a country like India.

1. Education, according to Gandhiji, becomes the birth-right of all in India where all people have equal opportunities, equal rights and equal responsibilities and where there are no distinctions between man and man on account of caste, colour and religion. Free and compulsory primary

education should be given to all boys and girls of the ages 6 to 14 in India for the very success of democracy which depends on enlightened electorate. Without education it is not possible for the citizens to exercise their rights and responsibilities in a proper way. But free and compulsory primary education has not been introduced in India for want of funds. According to his scheme of education, the State will purchase the goods manufactured by the children in the schools and out of the sale proceeds the teachers' salary will be paid. The students will not be required to pay any fees in cash and the entire burden of Primary education will not be borne by the State. Thus his scheme will facilitate the introduction of free and compulsory primary education on a nation-wide scale which has been delayed so far for want of fund.

2. A society will be formed which is based on truth and nonviolence and where there will be no distinction between man and man and people will co-operate to achieve no common interest. While taking work from the children in the school, Gandhiji does not like to exploit them. The pay of the teachers which is to be met out of the sale proceeds of the goods manufactured by the children in the school is, therefore, very low. If the teachers are offered high salaries, the children will have to work more and more. If so much work is taken from them it will mean exploitation and hence violence. Though Gandhiji makes education craft-centred, he does not like to produce factory workers who enter into competition for the sale of their manufactured products. Here the worker will produce only so much with his own hands as will be consumed either by his family or at best by the village community. So the question of entering into a commercial rivalry with other nations does not arise at all. His entire scheme of education is rooted in non-violence and love of freedom for the lowest. As he believed that machine-civilisation would lead the workers into complete dependence on a few industrialists and ultimately to rivalries between nations, he avoided large-scale production and based Indian economic life on small-scale village production, making education craftcentred.

3. The students will come out of the schools as persons sufficiently trained to meet any difficult situation. They will not remain unemployed. They will practise their craft and earn their living.

4. Mother-tongue being the medium of instruction will occupy the first place among the languages that will be taught in the school and as such the students will understand the subjects better.

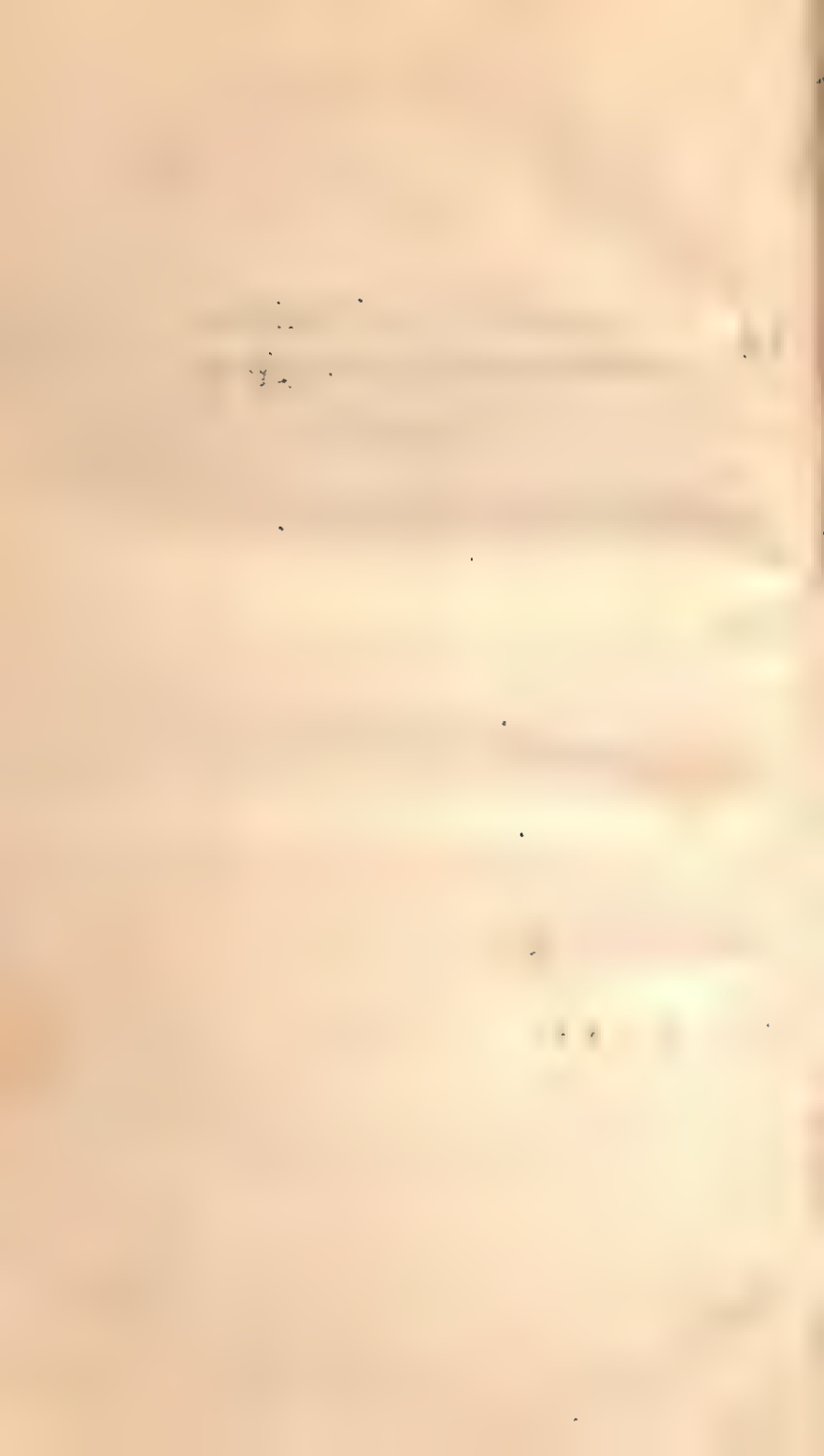
5. The knowledge that the students will acquire through manual training would be more real more effective and more valuable than one which is received through book alone.

6. Due to destruction of the village organization by the Britishers, the villagers lost their occupations and become unemployed and poor. Gandhiji saw that for saving the nation at that critical time it was necessary to revive village economic life and to relate education to it. So he advocated Basic Education based on a craft in which the child was to be trained to be a producer.



14 The Gandhian Educational Approach to meet the Challenge of our Times

Renuka Ray



14 The Gandhian Educational Approach to Meet the Challenge of our Times

Renuka Ray

"My life is my message". This was what Gandhiji said to the Press when they wanted a statement from him after he broke his fast at Beliaghata in 1946 after the communal riots in Calcutta. He gave a message in Bengali "Amar Jeevan Amar Bani" as he had been learning this language during his sojourn in Noakhali. In his Centenary Year, are we able to interpret Gandhiji, as he would have wanted us to do in the youth and the country to-day? This is the question to which we have to find an answer if we are to be the true interpreters of Gandhiji.

Amongst those who had the unique privilege of working with him, whether they were in the front line of leadership or like many of us whom he trained as constructive workers in the different economic and social fields which to him were of equal importance, there is a tendency to explain the Gandhian approach within narrow limits. But Gandhiji is timeless and ageless, one of those rare personalities who have inspired human society since the dawn of history.

To Gandhiji the educational system was a matter of as great importance as political freedom for he considered that a nation in bondage must be able to first learn to think and develop the personality of each individual so that he can express himself to the fullest. It was thus that he included the boycott of schools and colleges as a major item of his programme for gaining independence, for he felt

that the educational system then in vogue was warping and thwarting the development of India's youth but, though Gandhiji was a revolutionary out to break a system he considered evil, he was essentially a practical man and down to earth in his approach to problems. He was not only concerned with breaking down the barriers that impeded progress but laid equal emphasis on the reconstruction and building of the nation. He believed essentially that Swaraj was something more than political liberty and meant that each individual must be so trained as to be able to express himself to the fullest without interfering with the rights of others. It was thus that he unfolded the basic system of education so that each individual could be fully developed to be a purposeful citizen, understanding his duties in a free and democratic nation. To achieve this the environment of the child, both physical and material, must be taken into consideration and learning must be such as to encourage co-ordinated activity of all faculties and be co-related to a craft. This in fact in a nutshell is the essence of the basic system of education as propounded by Gandhiji and later given expression in the wider sense by the Zakir Husain Committee which was adopted as the basis of primary and secondary education by the Committee on Post-War Reconstruction in 1944. Education must be adapted to the actual living condition and not be divorced from reality as was prevalent in those times and which, unfortunately, in spite of our talks still remains in vogue to-day. Training must be such as to eliminate distinction, whether of caste, creed or wealth, so that a social standard would disappear and a sarvodaya society created.

Gandhiji used a symbolic approach which made it possible for him to touch the hearts of the masses of the people and capture their imagination. It was for this reason that the charkha became an important symbol through which he stressed the need for the economic rehabilitation of the rural people. He wanted purposeful activity through which each individual would become useful and so the charkha was introduced as a craft through which co-relation in learning could be brought about. Gandhiji lived in an area surrounded by districts where cotton was grown and he believed firmly that

the immediate environment and the surroundings should be utilised to teach the child and used the charka as a symbol but as he himself often told us and made it absolutely clear, craft such as agriculture and many others could be utilised equally well. His emphasis was not on a particular craft but on the need for purposeful activity, teaching the child to have self-respect by being useful.

There are one or two other important aspects on which Gandhiji laid emphasis in basic education which need to be taken into account in our educational reconstruction schemes to-day. The curriculum for the basic school, according to him, must include activities which laid stress on the need for cleanliness in the surroundings and a proper civic sense. He felt that the best way of overcoming the prejudices that existed in society by which a certain section of people by virtue of their occupation were condemned as scavengers and untouchables was if all the children in schools were taught to clean their own surroundings and safai became an important part of the curriculum. Even to-day though we talk much of equal social rights, there are still elements in the country which go in for practices which condemn certain sections as outside the pale. If this part of the curriculum which Gandhiji had suggested had become part and parcel of the school curriculum of our times then these lingering prejudices would have been largely eliminated by now.

There is another point of equal significance. Gandhiji laid stress on the need for self-sufficiency to the extent possible even in a school and there have been many critics of this. He had never suggested that a child might fully cover his expenses but he had suggested a means where by every child in the country could, while becoming educated, also be able to share the burden of the finances involved in bringing every child to a quality school. He did not believe in separate schools for the children of the rich and the poor which are in vogue to-day. It is true that we have a system of scholarship by which to some extent this defect is eliminated but it is not wide enough to make any great difference. The children of the rich and the poor in this country have no dialogue in the most

formative years of their life and how can national integrity in its fullest be possible unless some system is brought in through which this can be made possible ?' Mere expansion of literacy is not education and Gandhiji did not believe in statistical growth of numbers in schools and colleges but in the development of the personality of the child. It is to this that we have to pay attention to-day. There are two ways in which finances can be raised to provide for quality schools for all even with our meagre resources. One is that child to some extent shares in the expenses by growing vegetables in the school compound for providing nutritious midday meals for themselves, and other for school improvement, they could white-wash the school buildings and make simple articles of furniture in their carpentry classes. This is the trend even in the most modern schools including Public Schools to-day in the so called progressive nations. The other is that the school fees should be graded according to the income of the parents and the poorest alone should be given free studentships. It is the only way by which we can advance to bring quality education to the children of the rich and the poor alike so that equal opportunities become a reality.

Gandhiji believed that education in the higher stages must follow the same trend. Mere theoretical learning divorced from the way of living had led to parrot like declarations and professions which are not carried out in day to day living. It is the continuation of this in spite of the endeavour of Gandhiji and our most eminent educationalists that has resulted in tardy progress in the implementation of our plans with the consequent dire result,

The apostle of non-violence believed that Ahimsa was the weapon of strength against all evil and injustice. He did not want any blind adherence from any one. With his unerring instinct he knew that man would ultimately realise the futility of violence as a weapon through which any problem could be solved. Human history provided the answer and it was necessary that youth be taught to think without being limited by the prejudices that had brought society to the brink of ruin. All that is basic and helps the development of man of the ethical principles and the disciplines that have

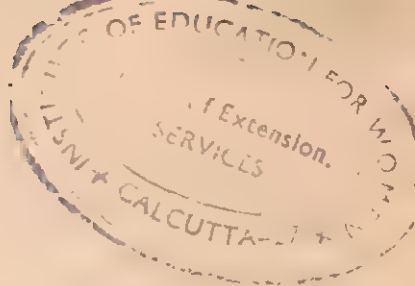
made him a higher species must be retained but the walls that prevent his growth must be broken down. Education must help youth towards this end, towards valuing the best within each individual and society and yet giving due regard to the true beliefs of others.

If the Gandhian concept is applied even now in our educational approach, we will be able to remove some of the difficulties that are causing unrest and turmoil. For instance, the problem of unemployment has become one of the major issues of to-day and this is to a great extent because we still continue with an educational system which is entirely out of tune with our needs. In spite of the fact that our administrative services are swelling in number and Parkinson's Law is ripe in the secretariats of our land, we are not able to meet the needs of the unemployed even in this field. If purposeful education had been introduced, then much of the frustration of the youth would have been overcome as the youth would have been then trained to fit into all the different types of work which are required for a developing nation. There are many unexplored avenues and there are others for which we can not find persons who have proper equipment. In spite of the recommendations of various Committees we still continue to have Graduates turned out from our Universities year by year many of whom remain misfits. There is a great demand for good stenographers but these are not available. Similarly, we want co-operative and production centres but who is to organise these? Only those who have failed in examinations or have not acquired any skill. Yet organization skill is to day recognised as being of as great an importance as finance or technical know how in the successful running of Industry Cottage, Small Scale or big in public or private sector. It is the failure to understand this need which mars every field of activity, and the net result of which is an unproductive society. An attitude of despair is not good enough but we have to look at facts on the face and if we can now retrace some of our steps and take the Gandhian approach and bring it into conformity with the needs of these days, we shall be able to introduce an educational system through which useful and purposeful citizens can be trained and found employment.

We believe the teacher is the pivot around whom the success or failure of educational reconstruction depends. His training and his emoluments must therefore be aligned on par with those of the highest executive services. Even to-day the truth of this is not recognised in its practical application. The Gandhian philosophy of education can only be given true expression by the best talent in the country. Much that is done in the name of basic education falls far short of the standard visualised by Gandhiji, because the teaching profession with notable exceptions does not draw the most talented.

In this Centenary Year of Gandhiji the best form in which we can pay him tribute would be to give expression to his philosophy of education which is in tune with the most modern trends in the world outside and implement this into our educational system.

To the youth I would appeal that they should make every effort to understand Gandhiji as he was and as he would have acted in regard to the problems of to-day. They should understand that he was a revolutionary of revolutionaries and yet had the most practical approach. To meet the challenge of these days, of a society living in an age where man is reaching the moon, where atombombs might destroy civilisation, it is necessary that man's behaviour should be able to assimilate and understand the mysteries of nature in such a manner that human civilisation is not destroyed. Gandhiji can give the answer to all the challenges of this age if we are able to understand and interpret him and apply his methods to the needs of to-day.



THE CONTRIBUTORS

BIO-DATA

SECTION - 1

(Gandhi : The Man)

Dr. John. D. K. Sundersingh : M. A. M. Ed, Ph. D. (London) is at present Principal of Scott Christian Postgraduate College, Negercoil (Kanya Kumari District), He is a prolific writer having written a number of articles and research papers.

Dr. R. L. Khandelwal : M. A. (B.H.U.), Ph. D. and D. Litt. (Agra) was formerly Dean of Arts faculty in Vallabh Vidhyanagar, Gujrat. He has written several books including " Hindi Kavya Main Prakriti Chitran " and Jaishanker Prasad-Vastu aur Kala (National, Delhi 1968). He has written more than a dozen critical and research articles. Has been Director of number of University seminars held under the auspices of University Grants Commission. Has had been invited by a number of Universities under the U. G. C. programme to talk on his field of study and specialisation. He has been guide of research and six persons have been awarded research degrees having worked under him. He is at present university professor and head Department of Hindi, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujrat.

B. Bisoon Doyal : (Mauritius) has to his credit a number of books, such as " Hindu Scriptures " " Eternal India ", " France looks at Modern India ", " The Essence of Vedas and Scriptures ", " India in French Literature ". "They Loved Mother India". " Speeches and Writings ". His very recent book entitled " The truth about Mauritius " has been published by BHARTIYA VIDYA BHAWAN, BOMBAY. Address ; Port Louis, Mauritius.

R. M. Thakur : (b. 1902), Education in India and Cambridge University, (U. K.) Position held : In Karachi Principal Shri Marwari Vidyalaya, Principal, Central Training College. Member of the Executive Committee of Sindh Secondary Teacher's Association, Karachi Member of the Examination Committee of School Board, Karachi Corporation. Headmaster B. L. High School, Bagar, Jaipur, (Rajasthan) Assistant Master, Perse School Hills Road, Cambridge, (U. K.). Joined Balson State as Guardian Tutor to Heir apparent and afterwards was appointed as Education and Finance Minister and then Chief Minister of the State. Came over to Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya after the merger of the States into Himachal Pradesh and has been serving the Vishwavidyalaya for the last 20 years in different capacities.

Mrs. Ila Butt : was born in Lahore in 1915. But she was educated mostly in Calcutta. She never cared to take degree or Diploma from any University because she believed that University education is a handicap to development of any creative faculty. Her ideal in life has been always to be a good wife and a good mother. She is interested much more in domestic work than in outdoor activities. Her main hobbies are knitting, gardening, cooking and home decoration. She keeps herself in touch with books and writes casually for books etc. She believes honestly that the redemption of India, as of the world, lies in the hands of women, and not of men.

Principal, Bhagwan Prasad Sinha : (b. 1921) M. A. (Philosophy) formerly Head of the Department of Psychology and Philosophy in R.K. College, Madhubaini for eleven years is now Principal L. N. Postgraduate College, Bhagwanpur since 1959. He is also Secretary of Bihar Darshan Parishad for eight years. A regular contributor to many Journals such as "The Indian Nation", "Searchlight", "Darshan International". He has written numerous research papers which include-"Can there be religion without God", "Man- His civilization needs spiritual and moral Basis", "Aims and Ideas of Education", "Philosophy of Basic Education". Broadcast a talk from AIR Patna, on the subject "Life and Philosophy-- gave talks on practical utility of Indian Philosophy and

on moral spiritual discipline, at Rotary Club (1951 and 1965 respectively). An important text book written by him on religion, for the post-graduate students for Philosophy is in press.

Dr. Narsinh Muljibhai Shah : (b. 1889), M. Sc. Ph.D., F. I. C. Retired Principal of a post-graduate College in Bombay Educational Service. Author of several books on popular science. Awarded twice the prize by Government, Written more than 100 research papers in Chemistry published in foreign and Indian Journals. Ex. Member Gujrat University Senate. At present, professor of Post-graduate Department of Chemistry, Sir, P. T. Science College Modusa (Sabarkaretha).

Prof. Radhakrishna Sharma : (b. 1920) B. A. (Hons.) M. A. (Hons.) M. A. (History) Formerly Principal, H. R. College, Amnaur (Saran-Bihar) is now Head, Postgraduate Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture (Rajendra College, Chappra) (Bihar University). Publications include-- Duniya Ki Kahani (2 Vol.) Great Britain Ka Itihas (three Volumes) and Bharat Ki Swadhinti Ki Kahani, Won prize from Bihar Rastra Bhasha Parishad in 1958 on the former book. Member : Indian History Congress and Institute of Historical Studies (Calcutta). Associated with the University of Bihar in several capacities.

Principal, R. K. Sharma : M. A. B. T. was Principal, Kokrajhar College (Assam) until recently. He is author of several books and has written numerous papers for Journals. Associated with Gauhati University in several capacities.

SECTION - 2

(The Economic Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi)

Dr. S. N. Jha : is recipient of Ph. D. degree on his pioneer research on the Economic Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. The book with forward by Mr. J. C. Kumar Mangalam is running in its

second edition. He is a versatile writer and at present Professor of Agricultural Economics in J. N. Agricultural University, College of Agriculture. Rewa.

Dr. Oudh Kishore Saxena : has written a number of books for degree and postgraduate students. He has delivered extension Lectures and written several research papers. Publications : "Principles of Economics", "History of Economic Thought", "Principles of Public Finance", "Problems of Indian Economy", "Indian Economics", "Monetary Economics". At present he is Head of the Department of Economics in N.A.S. Post Graduate College affiliated to Meerut University.

Dr. Usha Kiran Mehra : (b. 1936), Ph. D. (Allahabad University), under the guidance of Dr. J. K. Mehta - the world renowned Economist. She specialises in public finance. At present she is Reader in Economics in Benaras Hindu University.

Miss. P. Leela : (b. 1944), passed the B. A. (Hons.) Degree Examination in FIRST CLASS with ECONOMICS MAIN and the M.A. Degree Examination in FIRST CLASS with ECONOMICS MAIN in 1965 and 1966 respectively from the Andhra University, Waltair. Awarded Sir George Stanley Prize for distinguished merit in English at the B. A. (Hons.) Degree Examination. Now working as Associate Lecturer in Applied Economics & Co-operation in the Andhra University. Also carrying on research work for the Ph. D. Degree in International Economics at the same University. Possesses a working knowledge of French.

Dr. S. S. Gupta : recipient of D. Litt. degree on Gandhian Economic thought had a distinguished, academic career. He keeps on writing in journals and his D. Litt. thesis has been recently published. At present he heads the department of Economics in Dharma Samaj College, Aligarh affiliated to Aligarh University. He is on the Board of studies in Economics in Aligarh University.

Miss. Snigdha Das : (b. 1938), M. A. (Eco. & Geography) is a regular contributor to several journals of her subject. She is giving final touches to a Mss. related to the Economic problems of India. At present, she heads the Department of Economics in AKP College, Khurja affiliated to Agra University.

Miss. N. Raghvamma : M. A. (Eco.) had a distinguished academic career and is associated with the Department of Economics, Andhra University Waltair. She is working for a doctoral degree and has contributed a number of research papers to the journals.

SECTION - 3

(The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi)

Dr. S. Ballabh : Formerly Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science, Rajendra College, Chapra, and Ranchi College, Bihar University, (1951-1960) is at present Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science, Ranchi University, Ranchi. He has published four books on Indian constitutional system, Local Government in India and Civic Theory, besides numerous articles in Research Journals and Books. He is working on a thesis for D. Litt. degree of Patna University on "Ideological Foundations of the Indian Constitution". He has a flair for journalism also.

Dr. (Miss.) Krishna Kodesia : (B. 1933), had a distinguished academic career. She got her Master's degree in Political science at the age of 20 in 1953 and started her teaching career that very year. In 1958 she did her M. A. in History. Dr. Kodesia worked on the Problems of Linguistic States in India under the guidance of Dr. Prakash Chandra Mathur, Ph. D. (Lond) and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the Agra University. The examiners included eminent scholars like Dr. S. N. Verma, Ph.D. (California). She at present heads the department of Political

Science in Madhav College, Gwalior. She is working for the degree of D. Litt. on "A critical study of various facets of the problem of National Integration since independence".

Dr. G. K. Gehrana : is Reader in Political Science in Dharma Samaj College Aligarh affiliated to Aligarh University. Associated with the University in different capacities Dr. Gehrana has written a number of research papers and delivered Extension lectures. At present, he is giving final touches to a book on Gandhi intended to offer comments on the doctrines of value in Gandhian Political Thought.

Dr. K. Sree Rama Murty : (b. 1921) B. Sc. and M. Sc. from Banaras Hindu University. Got Ph. D. from the University of Cambridge, submitting a thesis on Molecular Structure by Microwave spectroscopy. Published numerous papers in Scientific Journals like the Transactions of the Faraday Society etc. Published articles in the Maha Bodhi, The Modern Review and a host of other periodicals and books on Education, Buddhism, Literary Criticism, on social and philosophical problems. Partook in discussions broadcast over B. B. C. London and has been delivering talks in various institutions on student and youth problems. Attempting to forge a synthetic vision that would en-compass the diverse human activities like Science, Technology, humanities, arts and religion. Had been a Principal of a Degree College in Science and Arts under Government of Orrissa for several years and is at present the Head of the Post-graduate Department of Physics in G. M. College, Sambalpur.

Dr. L. P. Chaudhary : (b. 1916), formerly on the Editorial Board of Indian Journal of Political Science, he is the author of four books. At present, he is in the Department of Political Science, University of Lucknow.

Dr. Parmatma Sharan : (b. 1961), Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science, Meerut College since 1957. He

has to his credit a number of books including the Imperial Legislative Council of India, Political System of China and Political System of Yugoslavia.

Dr. K. V. Vishwanathiah : Education- Mysore and Syracuse. At present, working as reader in Political Science. Formerly, he was a visiting Professor of Political Science at the Indian Co-operation Mission, Kathmandu, Nepal. In that capacity, he taught for a year at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal. He had worked as a Lecturer in Political Science at Maharaja's College Mysore, V. V. College, Hyderabad and Lecturer in Political Science (Public Administration) at Rajasthan University, Jaipur. During 1954-55, he had been to the University of Syracuse as a Fulbright scholar and he got his Master's Degree in Public Administration. He has published a number of articles in the leading journals and his unpublished works are : (I) How the Mysore Civil works ? (This has been accepted by Ranchi University for his doctorate degree); (II) Panchayati Raj and Bureaucracy (This has been published by Sterling Publishers in 1970); and (III) Working of the M. S. R. T. C. and the Mysore State Electricity Board.

Dr. Laxmi shanker : started his career as a journalist, but switched over to taxation practice. He has written articles in the books, magazines and dailies, and is now a days giving final touches to his book " ENGLISH ESSAYS AND ESSAYISTS : THE MODERN PHASE "

His research work on the Critical Writings of W. B. Yeats has earned glaring tributes from scholars.

Dr. C. P. Brahmo : Formerly Professor of Philosophy, Indore Christian College and then, Vice Principal, is a noted Scholar having guided many research projects carried on in Indian Universities. Is a specialist on Hindu Philosophy. His have been a , rticles published mostly in Journals abroad which brought fame to his country. Now veryold and convescent, he has contributed to this volume in spite of severe rheumatic pain in his shoulder.

Dr. B. R. Purohit : is recipient of Ph. D. degree on his pioneer research work "Hindu Revivalism and Indian Nationalism". Is at present Assistant Professor of Political Science in Saugor University Saugor.

Dr. N. S. Subramanyam : M. A. (English Lit.) (History) Ph. D. Awarded Ph. D. on his thesis English Poetical Plays (1850-1950). Heads post graduate department of English in Govt. Arts and Commerce, Jabalpur. A writer of numerous articles such as "Imagery in the Dynasts (Indian Review of English Studies, 1961), "Blackmur's Gesture : Possible Indian analogies" (Indian Response to American Literature (1968), "MacLeish's JB : Tragedy of affirmations" (Indian Essay on American Literature) (Popular, Bombay 1969), Candidates awarded Ph. D. having worked under him. Publications : Jonathan Swift, Geoffrey Chaucer (Kitab Mahal, Allahabad). Movements in Modern English Novel. He is giving final touches to his Pioneer Work "Progress of Literary theory : Comparative study of selected Western Eastern texts".

Dr. K. Seshadri : Now Reader in Public Administration, (Osmania University) Post-graduation Centre, Warangal. Took M. A. in Politics from Madras University, Master in Public Administration from the Institute of Social Studies, TheHague and Ph. D. from the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. Has been a teacher in political Science and Public Administration for more than 15 years. Has contributed articles for indian and overseas journals. Won II and I prize in consecutive years in the Essay writing Competition held by the India Institute of Public Administration.

SECTION 4

(Social and Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi)

Dr. R. N. Vvas : M. A. Ph. D. has won many prizes and a Gold Medal for outstanding acedemic success. He is a prolific writer. An author of several books, he has contributed on diverse topics like literature, Philosophy, Psychology, and socio-political

problems. Some of his published works are 'Peace' Philosophy, And Progress' (for which prof. Humayun Kabir has written a foreword), 'Samaja Darshana', "Svastha, Tan, Svasth Man, Svath Jivan", 'Ve Use No Rok Sake' etc. His forthcoming publications are 'The Synthetic Philosophy of the Bhagvata', 'The Nondualistic Trends of Bhakti Philosophy', 'Education and Human Society', Education And politics (Foreword by Dr. H. V. Pataskar), Humanitarian Ethics, Shiksha Darshan Ki Pramukh Pravratityan Tatha Samanjasyavad, Perspective For Constructive Leadership, Horizons of Human Progress, The Religion that we need and the religion that we must discard, etc.

Dr. L. P. Sinha : did his M. A. in Political Science from Patna University, Patna, and secured his Ph. D. degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science, London. He has been a University teacher since 1948 and is now Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science, Bihar University Muzaffarpur.

Usha Kiran Mehra (Please See Section 2)

Dr. P. N. Khare : is the Chairman, Board of studies in Sociology and Social work, Jiwaji University, Gwalior. At present, he is Head of the department of Postgraduate studies and research in Sociology, M. L. B. College, Gwalior. He has contributed Research papers in numerous journals and written two text books for undergraduate classes. He is highly interested in Social Research and specialized in Family Sociology.

Dr. A. R. Wadia : B. A. Bar-at-Law, Dip. in Economics and Political Science (Oxford) Education, Bombay, Cambrige and Oxford. Hon. Degrees, Titles : D. Litt. (Mysore University) Rajasevasakta (conferred by H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore, Padma Bhusan; Fields of special interest: Philosophy; Sociology, Politics, Social work. Present Positions Member of syndicates, senates and boards of studies of Mysore, Agra, Baroda and Benaras Hindu University

S. N. D. T. University, and Annamalai University, Annamalai, Vice-president, Indian Conference of Social work, Member, University Grants Commission etc. Publications: Ethics of Feminism, Civilisation as a Co-operative Adventure " edited History, and Philosophy of Social work in India etc. Arts : numerous articles in Commemorative Volumes and Journals Add. Kalpana 97, Marine Drive Bombay-2.

Prof. O. P. Verma : Formerly Head of Extension and Research Department of Rural Sociology and Community Development in Rural Institute Rajpura (Punjab). Has written following books approved as text books in several Indian Universities.

Publications: (i) Samajshastra Ka Parichaya, (ii) Samajik Parivartan (iii) Bhartiya Sanskriti and Samajik Sansthayen (iv) Samajik Anusandhan (v) Samajik Vichardhara (vi) Bhartiya Samajik Sansthayen. He is at present Head of the Department of Sociology in J. V. Jain, Post Graduate College, Saharanpur affiliated to Meerut University (U.P.)

Dr. R. N. Sharma : Professor of Philosophy Meerut College Meerut has written more than a quarter century of books. Chairman Board of studies, in Philosophy, Meerut University and member of different Boards of studies Dr. Sharma is also General Editor of Research. Journal of Social Science. The Volume I & II, which made sensation all over the world were devoted to the study of Psychology and Yoga. He is writer of Philosophy of Sir Aurobindo, Principles of Sociology, Social Anthropology. Peoples Administration of India, Social welfare and security in India, Social Control and Social change, Social Disorganisation, Outlines of General Psychology, Applied Psychology, Child Psychology, Experimental Psychology, Indian Philosophy Outline of Ethics" western. Philosophy, History of Modern western philosophy, Educational psychology. His recent book entitled Principles of Sociology, has been published by Asia publishing House, Bombay.

Dr. R. C. Gupta : (M. A. Pol. Sc.), M. A. (Philosophy), M. A. Hons. (Hindi), Ph. D. started his career as a Lecturer in Pol. Science and has worked in this capacity for more than a decade. At present, he is working both as Head of the Department of Pol. Science and Principal at I. K. Degree College, Indore. Besides, he is a prolific writer and author of several outstanding works, both in English and Hindi. "Lal Bahadur Shastri : the man and His Ideas", "Socialism, Democracy and India"; "Political Philosophies of Eminent Americans", "Great Political Thinkers : East and West" and "who Rules and country" are some of his outstanding works. Scores of his articles and research papers have appeared in various Indian and foreign journals of repute. Although, a teacher by profession, he has a flair for journalism and has worked in the capacity of a leader-writer in many journals.

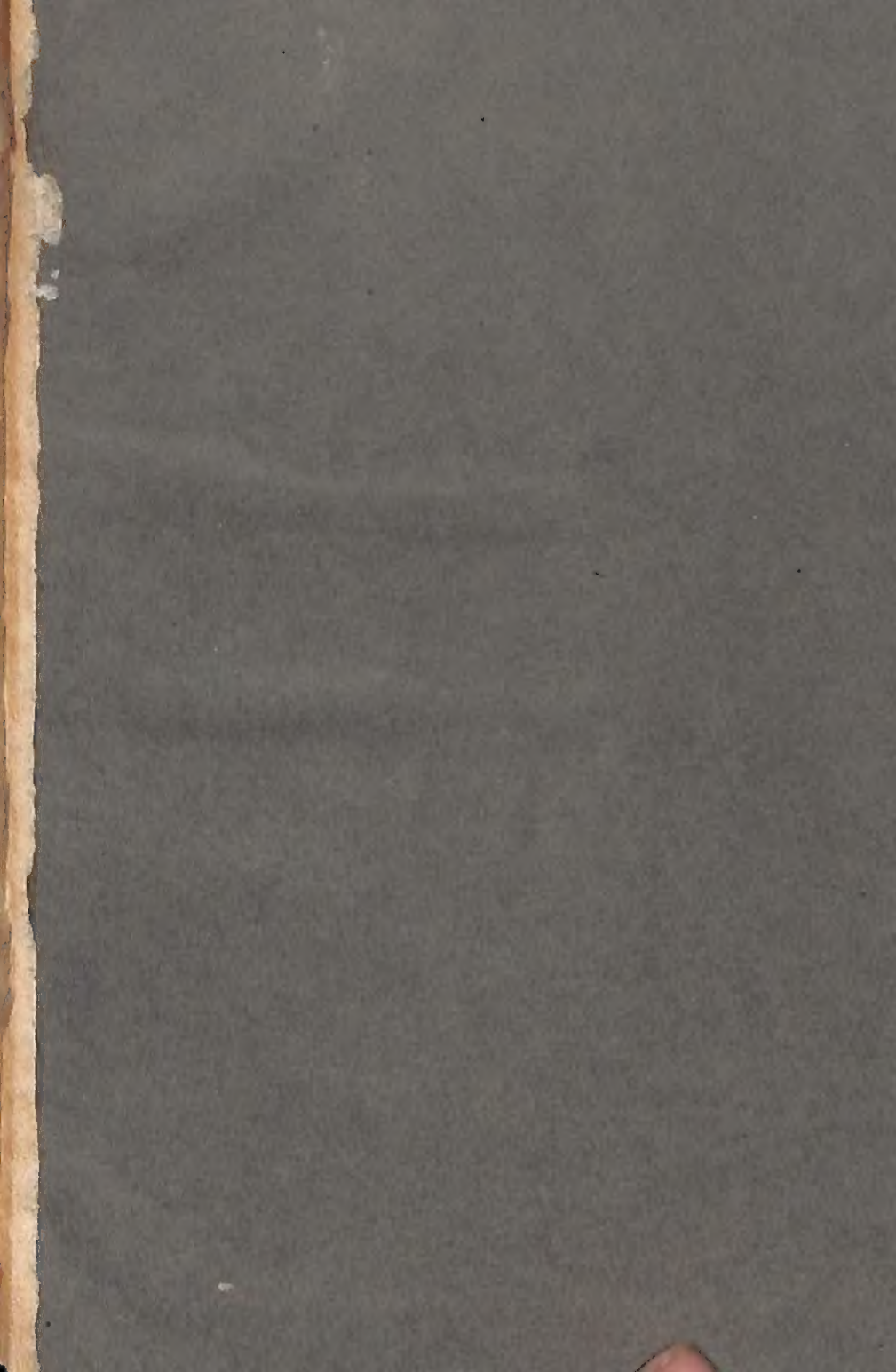
Prof. Paul Verghese : M.A., M.Ed. (Leads) L. C. P, (Lond) M. R. S. T. (Eng.) (b.1911) Was Principal of Training College for over 16 years and Director of Textbooks and Examinations for three years. Author of several textbooks for the Training College and Schools, and a contributor of articles to various Universities and a member on educational commissions and boards. Now retired from the Government Educational Service, but engaged in organising a Residential School as its Principal.

Dr. Father Thomas Mootheden : (3. 1911), B. A. (Hons.) (1933) D.D. from Kandy (1942) Private Secretary to the Archbishop of Ernakulam (1942-52), Vice-Principal, Nirmada College, Muvattupuzha Principal, St. Thomas College, Trichur since 1963. Member- Syndicate, Academic Council and faculty of Science, Philosophy. Chairman of the Post-graduate Board of studies in Mathematics and Statistics. Author of numerous books on Algebra, Trigonometry and Calculus; Has written 25 books in Malayalam and translated the Bible into Malayalam, which is running through the second edition. Winner - award of the Sahitya Academy (Kerala).

Principal B. N. Tripathy : M. A. (History), M. A. (Economics), B. Ed; is at present Principal Jawaharlal College, Patnagarh (Orrisa). He keeps himself in a close touch with recent literature and writes articles for research journals from time to time.

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